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SKETCHES IN INDIA,

TREATING ON

Subjects Connected with the Government;

CIVIL AND MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS;

CHARACTERS OF THE EUROPEAN,

AND

CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVE INHABITANTS.

BY WILLIAM HUGGINS,

LATE AN INDIGO PLANTER IN THE DISTRICT OF TIRHOOT.

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— "Liberius si
"Dixero quid, si fortè jocosius: hoc mihi juris
"Cum veniâ dabis."—

LONDON:

JOHN LETTS, JUN. 32, CORNHILL.

1824.

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INTRODUCTION.

In presenting the world with a series of letters, upon the domestic habits and characteristic features of the people who inhabit and reside in our Bengal possessions, the author's object is to draw a line of approximation between them and their fellow subjects resident in England, and by a distinct sketch of the minute traits in the picture, to instruct the Englishman who never visited India, on points which may interest the junior members of his family. India, at present, presents such a field of patronage to young men of reputable families, both in the civil and military departments, and forms a focus of such extensive interest to British youth, that the author conceives no apology requisite

an undertaking which may throw some light upon subjects connected with their future destiny. In the present work he has no intention to enter on mercantile subjects, or animadvert on the resources and commerce of this fertile country; his object is to give a view of men and things as they appear to a common observer, and this, he can say conscientiously, he has done without fearing any man's resentment or courting any man's favour. The author thinks it necessary to apologize for his spelling of Indian names, and hopes that the confession that he is not an oriental scholar will obtain grace for him; his Indo orthography has been guided by his ear, spelling the words as they are commonly pronounced, not by any fixed standard or according to their root. This liberty he knows may not be tolerated by many people, nevertheless he has taken it, and must abide the consequence. The author of these

letters was unconnected with the Company, either in a civil or military capacity, and if he might attach any value to his opinions, without being guilty of presumption, it is on this account. Men differently circumstanced have their interests to advance, and the prejudices which naturally arise from their situation; he is free from these, he stands as an isolated individual, and gives his opinion without being swayed by passion or party, from which he was aloof. Without aspiring to the gravity of history, which only animadverts upon great events, and leaves minor ones in obscurity, which only portrays the grand outlines of the picture, and overlooks the numerous inferior etchings necessary to render it complete; a description of the passing events or usages, may be fairly termed a history of the day, and takes up the pencil where general history lays it down. Impartiality and observation are the necessary requisites

for such an undertaking, the one to acquire information, the other to give it in its true light, as any deviation from truth would occasion injustice to people now in existence, and rebound with disgrace upon i author. Should this volume meet with favourable reception from the public, the author is possessed of materials for adding considerably to its size in a second edition.

Jan. 1824.

ERRATA.

Page 15, line 25, *for* 'Rohilla,' *read* 'Rohill...'
32, 18, *dele* 'which are founded upon the Hindoo and Mahomedan customs or laws.'
80, 15, *for* 'their,' *read* 'its.'
91, 2, *for* 'Zahore,' *read* 'Lahore.'
128, 11, *for* 'the paw on his,' *read* 'his paw on its.'
136, 9, *for* 'There,' *read* 'Their.'
150, 13, *for* 'tropical,' *read* 'topical.'
213, 26, *for* 'Feriglit,' *read* 'Ferishta.'

SKETCHES IN INDIA.

LETTER I.

DEAR Z.

s transcribing for your perusal, the observations which a residence in Bengal has enabled me to make, I shall do it with the confidence that what is well meant on my part will be well received on yours. The tepid clime of India has not obliterated from my heart its feelings of early friendship;—may yours be as constant in the more healthy one of England! The course of my observations has made me acquainted, in a greater or less degree, with many prevailing habits and usages of British India; these it shall be my business to describe, in such a manner as to give an accurate conception of them, without encumbering you by too many particulars, or running myself into prolix arguments. Where my opinion may appear false or erroneous, condemn me; I claim no title to infallibility, and

would be sorry to be the cause of misleading any man—but to my purpose. After sailing five months through the ocean; after enduring the ennui to which landsmen are subject on board of a ship, the voyager looks forward with a longing eye as he approaches Bengal. The entrance to this fertile province is choked up by numerous sandbanks, which render the navigation very difficult; upon approaching them, a pilot is taken in. The Bengal pilots have to pass a considerable period in subordinate duties before they are appointed to this situation, which is one of great trust, owing to the dangerous navigation, from the sands, up to Calcutta. They are paid by government, and receive a handsome salary, which is earned by hard labour and long service. The first land which presents itself to view, at your arrival on the Bengal coast, is Saugur Island, which is covered with jungle, and affords a retreat to tigers, and such other wild beasts as are common in the jungles of India. A company, composed of Calcutta agents and merchants, associated about six years ago, to clear out this island, and render the lands fit for cultivation; expecting, from its proximity to the sea, that at some future period it might become a point of attraction to invalids, and persons who wish to enjoy the sea air: however,

I imagine the period is remote when Saugur Island will be metamorphosed into a Brighton, for the inhabitants of Bengal, as many years must elapse before the jungle can be cleared away. During a period of five years, they have rendered a very small space (perhaps seven miles in circumference) fit for cultivation, which must make a poor return for the money and life expended in this undertaking. It is necessary to inform you, that residing among jungle is highly dangerous both to Europeans and natives of the country, in consequence of jungle fever, which is a disease of the greatest malignity, and carries off its victims in a few days; whilst this disorder is spreading destruction amongst the miserable workmen, no immediate benefit is derived by the projectors; and I consider this undertaking to be one of those air bubbles which speculators are so much addicted to forming. The clearing of Saugur appears to be distant, and almost hopeless; for, allowing those who have undertaken it every merit, they are not likely to persevere against obstacles and losses; though we should rejoice at the success of a project, which would change the tiger's den into a dwelling for man, and render a noxious wilderness into a seat of [illegible]. After passing Saugur, you enter the Hooghly, and sail up it through a country which

cultivates scarcely any crop but rice, and affords a very dull prospect to an English eye, accustomed to those varied landscapes which home presents—where the earth is robed in verdant meadows and golden crops. Before the season for sowing rice has arrived, the fields, parched by a burning sun, present an arid, hard surface to the eye, without a blade of grass, and the stranger asks in astonishment, "Is this the fertile India? Are these her productive plains?" They are; and those very lands which are then so unpromising after the rains commence, without labour, and with very little trouble, will pour upon their possessors an abundant harvest. Upon approaching Calcutta, Garden Reach is the first object of interest which appears, rising like a fairy isle, in the midst of a desert, and offering to the view a succession of beautiful villas, surrounded by groves of lofty trees; to these the wealthy inhabitants of Calcutta retire, in order to enjoy a relaxation from the fatigues of business, and possess accommodations fit for realising the poet's wish; and fit, *ducere, sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ.* Surrounded by every comfort and every luxury India affords, British merchants, in this agreeable retreat, breathe an air unpolluted by the smoke and effluvia of Calcutta; light, airy buildings, gardens tastefully laid out, and

walks agreeably shaded, along the river side render an abode in this quarter highly agreeable. The company has a botanical garden here, which is maintained at a heavy expense, and superintended by a medical gentleman, who is a good botanist. It abounds with flowers and plants, both indigenous and exotic, interspersed tastefully in beds, surrounded by groups of trees, and is a point of attraction to Sunday parties, who come to gaze upon, and enjoy its beauties. From Garden Reach to Calcutta is a pleasant sail of half an hour, during which the eye wanders in admiration over those beautiful structures, which tower above the river's banks.

Yours, &c.

LETTER II.

DEAR Z.

A stranger, on his arrival in Calcutta, is delighted, perhaps astonished at the mass of noble buildings, which crowd upon him in every direction. The Fort first attracts his notice, built on a spot somewhat elevated above the river and plain which surrounds it, possessed of deep fosses which can

be always flooded, and great artificial strength. Although its elevation is inconsiderable, there is no spot adjacent which commands it. The opposite side of the river is lined with gentlemen's houses, extensive buildings, cotton factories, &c. which occupy his attention until he arrives at Chaud-paul Ghaut. He lands, gazes at the edifices which compose Government Row, until he arrives at the government palace. This magnificent structure, which would not sink in a comparison with most palaces in Europe, owes its rise to th princely disposition of Marquis Wellesley. Setting aside the royal palaces in London, which do no compete with this, I have seen the Thuilleries and palace of Versailles, and think neither of them equals the government house in uniformity and majesty of design; the building of it is said to have cost upwards of a million sterling, and to have excited considerable discontent at the India House. I shall here observe, if the East-India company are so mercenary as to deny the expenses necessary for erecting magnificent buildings, their empire may endure, and may perish without leaving a trace of its grandeur behind, or mark to show the tide of its prosperity. What has distinguished the conquests of the Greek and Romans from those of Timur and Zinghis Khan? —What but the arts, the improvements, the

civilization, and the monuments which time has not been able to destroy, but after a lapse of ages remain to excite our emulation, and instruct our minds. Palmyra still towers amidst the desert, and speaks the magnificence of Zenobia, whilst the track of Timur is not seen upon the sand—his armies annihilated and mingled with the dust. If the company, from another motive, from a spirit of avarice, walk in the track of this waster, and refuse to impress a single stamp of greatness upon the empire they have seized, their conduct is much more culpable. They are not Tartars of the desert, but men instructed in the arts of civilized life—in the history of past ages, aware of the duties which attach to rule and improvements due to their empire; if, then, from the wretched love of gold, they deviate from these, their conduct is highly censurable. The marquis had collected materials at Barrackpore for erecting another magnificent building there, and had commenced the foundations when his government expired. In consequence of the avarice I have condemned, this design was given up by his successors, and Lady Hastings erected a green-house from the neglected pile. Speaking of the houses belonging to Europeans generally, they are very commodious, and perhaps no class of men in the world, of equal condition, is better lodged; how-

ever, to descend from generals to particulars, by describing one, you may form an idea of the whole. A gentleman's house in Calcutta is a large, square building, covered with a composition which resembles freestone, and gives an uniform, agreeable appearance to the building, as if formed of cut stone; the roof is flat, and distinct from the body of the house runs a colonnade, which serves to decorate it, and encloses a space pleasant to walk in, called a veranda; venetians painted green serve for windows; in fine, with some exceptions, its form and general appearance resemble an English castle, or rather the hotel of a rich Parisian, enclosed by a wall or metal railing. You may easily conceive the fine *coup d'œil* of a wide and regular street, composed of houses, such as that I have described; indeed the English town merits an appellation, of which its inhabitants are ambitious, viz.—the City of Palaces; there are several squares, but that called Tank Square is the largest; it derives this name from a tank or pond of water in the area. You must not imagine Calcutta is composed entirely of buildings, like that I have described; on the contrary, take it all in all, perhaps no city in the world deserves to be called a mass of misery and magnificence more justly. After leaving the grand streets, and approaching the abodes of its native population, a

very different spectacle meets the eye. Huts built of mud, or bamboos and grass, low, filthy, and crowded with people, constitute the habitations of poor natives. The population that resides within a square of these huts is very great, and would create surprise in any one who has not witnessed such a scene. During the monsoons fires frequently occur among these huts, and endanger the stately dwellings of their English neighbours; however, in an occurrence of this kind, the police hasten with their fire engines, and prevent the extensive injury which would otherwise be occasioned. Some rich natives dwell in elegant mansions, built after the English style; others, inferior to them, erect large houses, which in their internal construction resemble the old abbeys or castles we read of in romances. Narrow intricate passages, winding alleys, here and there a little dark apartment, low doors, and flights of stairs, small venetians, or, if near the haram, loop holes demonstrate the suspicious, narrow mind of its inmate.

Yours truly, &c.

LETTER III.

DEAR Z.

When a writer describes the inhabitants of a city or country, he is generally expected to devote more of his time and attention to an elucidation of the form of government, and conduct of the ruling powers, than to a description, of those calmer and more domestic occurrences, which are to be met with. In the plan which I have proposed to pursue, these shall be mentioned; but I by no means consider this part of my subject entitled to more particular attention than others of inferior importance.

Every history of India must describe subjects connected with its government, but cannot descend to others, on which I shall direct your attention hereafter. The governor of Bengal is also governor general of India, being possessed of a controlling and directing power over the inferior presidencies of Madras and Bombay. He is assisted by a council, in which all state affairs are debated and decided by a majority. However, should the majority dissent from his opinion, he is authorized to act on his own responsibility. This power attaches a despoti option to his person,

both impolitic and imprudent, and enables him to enter into wars with the native princes, by his sole authority, in order to extend the boundaries of an empire, already overgrown. The success which has hitherto attended our arms in India, and the splendid character acquired by its governors, must fill the mind of any man possessed of moderate ambition, with a desire to imitate their example and emulate their fame. He reads of the territory acquired, and powers subdued during the administration of his predecessors, and looks about for an enemy from whom he can wrest similar advantages. What renders the bait more tempting, is the personal glory which attaches to the governor general himself, and totally eclipses that of councils or commanding officers. Thus the names of Meadows, Harris, and Hislop, are lost in those of Cornwallis, Wellesley, and Moira. From this personal eclât which attaches to the governor general, as real, or supposed mover of the machine, and director of its operations, a stimulus is produced which excites him to military enterprize, and which neither prudence nor principle are always able to check. Further, he has never been to India before, and is practically unacquainted with its business, its interests, relations and intrigues; and if he should be a weak or an obstinate man, (which is by no means im-

possible) might be led to adopt measures prejudicial to the true interest of the country. Whilst I thus state the disadvantages of this unlimited power in the governor general, I will briefly touch upon the advantage of having him curbed. With exception of the commander-in-chief, the council is composed of civil servants who have spent the greater part of their lives in India, long initiated in its customs, and conversant with its interests. Such men as these are proper to advise, and if it be necessary to check a new governor, until he acquires that knowledge necessary for the efficient discharge of his administration: as, if he only pay due attention to their opinions, his own ignorance cannot be productive of any ill consequence. They are men who, after a long service, have risen gradually to the highest posts, and may be fairly presumed fit to discharge the duties of their several stations. From these premises I conclude their voice should be decisive; and that the governor should have no discretionary power independent of them. The council, too, have got no glare of false glory to mislead them, neither collectively nor individually do they acquire any increase of reputation from foreign conquests; no wreath of victory dances before their eyes to blind them against the suggestions of prudence, and therefore they serve as a barrier against

the consequences of that fascination, to which the governor is subject. I shall adduce a fact to support and illustrate this opinion:—viz. the Nepaul war. The boundary between our possessions and those of Nepaul was not marked properly before the war; for the two territories, in many places, join without any local point of distinction. In cases of this kind the inhabitants of the opposite territory encroach upon each other, and disputes frequently occur from the desire of one party, to take possession of his neighbour's property, which among our native subjects, is the cause of frequent law-suits. A dispute of this nature occurred between the Rajah of Betia and a Nepaul landholder, and led to a scuffle between the parties, in which one or two men were killed; which was the aggressor I am not positive, but think it was the Rajah, who, finding he could not carry his point, made a complaint to government, which ultimately brought on hostilities. To settle an affair of this kind, a plain, thinking man might suppose easily accomplished without engaging in a war; however, the fact was different. Lord Moira proposed hostilities, but was overruled by a majority of the council; he was overruled in waging a war of ambition, by men whose experience, upon Indian affairs, was greater than his; by men whose minds were not seduced by

the glare of military fame. I have instanced this as a case, in which the council opposed with propriety, and, no doubt, many others must occur in so extensive a government. The secretaries of civil and military departments rank next to the council in respectability, and have important duties to perform. Since the governors of India have often attracted the attention of the British public, a few observations upon them may not prove unacceptable to you. Among these I shall select Warren Hastings, Lord Wellesley, and Lord Hastings, for a brief notice. The character and conduct of Warren Hastings have been exposed to more searching investigation and overwhelming invective, than those of any modern statesman who has figured on the arena of politics; so that the mind of an investigator rises wearied from the examination, and overwhelmed by the mass of evidence which was collected to condemn him. The commanding situation and eagerness of his adversaries are pledges that nothing was omitted to prove his guilt; whilst he alone, descending almost from a throne to the bar of accusation, from the government of an empire to the degradation of a culprit, excites our interest and pity. He passed through the inferior grades of the Indian civil service with distinguished honour, and at length rose to the rank of governor, owing to the as-

cendant of a party in the India House which disapproved of Clive's victorious career, and chose as the fittest person to fill that high office, Warren Hastings. The report of enormities committed by his predecessors had reached England, in consequence of which, Sir Philip Francis, Sir John Clavering, and Colonel Monson were sent out as members of council, expressly to curb the governor; these three constituted a majority, which, at that time, was decisive; and as long as they agreed, the government was virtually in their hands. Jealousies might naturally be expected to arise from such an order of things, which rendered the president only a nominal one; however, after some time, Colonel Monson died, by which Warren Hastings again acquired real authority, as he could command a majority. That men, deprived by an accident of their influence, should act in opposition, is no way astonishing; that men, who had always lived in England, should oppose a veteran in Indian affairs, is no way astonishing; in short, disappointment, ambition, and education, placed them in an opposition to the governor, which they maintained till the last. The Robilla war, seizure of Benares, death of Rajah Nandcomar, and annulment of the Bengal leases, are, I think, the chief points on which his conduct has been attacked. I shall

not plead in his defence those intrigues which are so prevalent in an Indian cabinet, and are known only to the actors, those machinations which roused his hostility. I shall not defend his wars on the score of justice, for it is a test to which no conquerors have been subjected, but look simply to consequences; the acquisitions he made added consistency to our possessions; gave them the shape and form of a connected empire; gave them stability. If we censure his conduct, why do we retain them? Why have we an empire in India at all? We have no natural right; we did not purchase it; we have conquered it. Warren Hastings added rich provinces to our empire; we retain them; we glory in them; we reap advantages from them; and shall we arraign as a culprit the man who procured them for us? If England did not wish to be grateful to her benefactor, she should not have ruined him; if she wished to avoid the odium entailed by those acquisitions, she should have restored them, instead of exhibiting a mock resentment against the man who procured them, whilst the provinces acquired by his talents and political sagacity, are esteemed a precious dowry. It was not generous to brandish the rod of correction above his head, who drew forth a jewel, valuable as the

brightest in her coronet; which blazes on her brow, and accuses her of ingratitude. Because the commons possessed humanity, they credited every tale of his inveterate enemies; because another Cicero wished to find another Verres, the governor of India was accused; eloquence, and enmity, and enthusiasm united, but proved he had served his masters too ably. Mr. Hastings is blamed for compassing Nundcomar's death, on account of that person's enmity and accusation of bribery. To this I reply, he was convicted before a British judge and jury of forgery; and although hostile feelings on Mr. Hasting's part, might have promoted his prosecution, it was an English jury and English law that sentenced him to death. Now as to the leases:—under the Mogul and former dynasties, the emperor was considered proprietor of the soil, and all leases, tenures, or grants, emanated from him: so that after we came to possess Bengal, revoking the emperor's leases, and granting them in our own name, was merely an act asserting our sovereignty; whilst the method which Mr. Hastings made use of, in order to ascertain the value of lands, by putting them up to auction, with a preference to the owner, was a procedure of the deepest policy. The Native Indians are fondly attached to lands or villages left by their fathers; and whilst public auction would cause a

competition advantageous to government, the original proprietor would in most cases retain his property. The grants of land which pays no revenue, called Jagheer, made by the emperors, were respected; so that moderation was not lost sight of in this procedure. Notwithstanding the outcry that was raised against it, I am convinced both of the wisdom and propriety of this measure; for without such a one, our revenue must have been unsettled and mismanaged; forged grants, already numerous, would have multiplied, and the emperor's name have been used, to cheat the Company. The effect of his measures was soon apparent, in an ameliorated condition of the inhabitants; institution and regularity succeeded disorder and tumult; people found themselves equitably governed, applied to the cultivation of their lands, and our possessions are now the most flourishing in India. The principal traits that strike us in Warren Hastings, are a strong, inflexible determination, that soared above all obstacles; a fearless courage, and a regulated ambition which secured what it grasped at, without risking too much by hazardous projects. A deep knowledge of Indian politics, that rendered him a match for the most intriguing of its princes, and a solid judgment which enabled him to decide justly on the most difficult points. These shining qualities were

shaded by an arrogant and haughty spirit, and an insensibility to the sufferings of others, which does not speak much for his humanity. He was certainly a great man; but we cannot pronounce him a good one without considerable qualifications. The Marquis of Wellesley, although but a short period in India, played during that time a shining part. His mind did not require time to develope its force, but burst forth with an energy, that uniformly commanded success. His war against Tippoo Sahib, undertaken in consequence of that monarch's engagements with France, was a masterpiece of decision and vigour. When the Madras government started objections and required delay, instead of attending to them, his orders were peremptory respecting their preparations; he came to the spot and directed affairs himself, so that to the marquis' personal exertions and talents, may, in a great measure, be attributed the success of this war. In his subsequent contest with the Mahrattas, the same energy was displayed: the victories gained by Lake and Wellesley, against a formidable enemy, commanded by French officers, equal any we read of in the history of India. In its domestic branches, his administration was equally splendid. The government house which he built, the guards he maintained, the style he supported were princely. The Marquis Wellesley

possessed shining talents, and a magnificent temper, which fitted him to govern India with eclât, and to adorn it with such marks of splendor as a great empire should possess. He did the honors of Colonel Wellesley's parts, and first gave him an opportunity to distinguish himself in that profession, by which he has since risen so high. The Marquis of Hastings commenced his warlike operations against the Nepaulese, in my opinion, from ambitious motives. To prove the truth of this assertion, I shall enter into a few particulars respecting the origin of the Nepaul war. In consequence of the dispute to which I have already alluded, between the Betia Rajah and a Nepaulese, and others of a similar kind which were frequently occurring, Colonel B. was appointed by the British government, and Pursaram Thakor by that of Napaul, to enquire into and adjust existing differences. Colonel B. resided at Gorasain, and Pursaram Thakor, about si[illegible]en miles distant at Baharwa, and, during the rains of 1814, a negociation was carried on for some months between the two envoys. As the dry season approached, which is the proper time for military operations in India, Pursaram Thakor visited Colonel B., and enquired if any answer to his last dispatches had been received from the governor-general, who was then on a progress to the upper

provinces, and had reached Futtygur: he was told not, and returned to his quarters.

It is to be observed, from the commencement of this affair the governor-general had assumed a warlike attitude, and continued to complete his military preparations whilst the negociations were pending. Shortly after Pursaram Thakor's visit, Colonel B. ordered his escort to march, in the dead of night; surrounded the village of Buharwa, and cut to pieces or dispersed Pursaram Thakor's guard, whilst that unhappy man, roused from his bed by the tumult, seized his sabre, attacked and dangerously wounded the officer who entered his ent, but fell by the bayonet of a Seapoy. The rt of Nepaul, exasperated at this unprincipled k, besides taking decisive measures for war, hree lacs of rupees for Colonel B.'s head, d emissaries to assassinate him, from several other officers narrowly my assemble , they took ons: Colonel B.'s escort Pursagurry, under Capnent was advanced upon onel B. himself retired to neral M.; at Sumulpore, uth, two hundred and der Captain B. On . wrote from Pur-

sagurry to General M. for reinforcements, as he had received positive information the enemy intended an attack. On the 1st of January, 1815, before day-break, Captain S.'s post was attacked by seven thousand Nepaulese; the troops were stationed in a mango grove; their rear was defended by a rapid river, and they maintained this unequal contest for the space of an hour, until their ammunition was expended, and three-fourths, among whom was their gallant commander, lay dead or wounded on the field. A council of war was held, and the survivors resolved to swim the river as their only chance of escape; most of them succeeded in this attempt, and met, about two miles distant, a body of infantry under Major C[illegible] who retired on hearing of their disaster. Su[illegible] pore was attacked about the same time, an[illegible] officers, with their party, nearly all cu[illegible] gained the Goorkha country w[illegible] tributary to them, and se[illegible] to our possessions in th[illegible] sequent war against the [illegible] only of strict justice, but [illegible] these marauders, breaking [illegible] hold, used to spread dest[illegible] adjacent provinces; wh[illegible] rapine and violence e[illegible] fancy could excite the[illegible]

for its silver ornament—they waded to plunder through murder and blood: robbers by profession, they subsisted on the pillage extorted with an armed hand from industry; their peace was that of satiety, which required rest to gorge its spoil; their war, that of the tiger roaming for its prey. They crossed the Nerbudda, made several irruptions on our territory, and returned in safety, laden with spoil; the celerity of their motions protected them from pursuit, so that nothing but a systematic war could overcome them. His lordship ordered the troops from Madras and Bombay to proceed toward their country, whilst himself ook command of the Bengal army, and marched such a direction that the Pindarees were ned in by the armies from our three presiden- The Mahrattas, who had secretly counte- encouraged them, took advantage of ffi rs to unite against us; how- no alteration in the sub- defeated the Maharattas ok th rts, and con- ndered or e them from uit until they by this means he disgrace and mentioning here,

that in places where their visits were expected, the inhabitants have been known to perform the Joar*, burying themselves and families in ruin, to escape these villains' enormities. His lordship in this war displayed extensive military capacity, and his operations were planned with a degree of wisdom and skill that do high credit to his talents. In his civil conduct, his lordship observed that moderation and regard for liberty, which, during the course of a long life, he has uniformly professed. He cancelled those restrictions which had been, before his time, imposed on the press, and by enabling the inhabitants of India to write their sentiments freely, has done an important service to the community. In short, if we could blot the Nepaul war out of Lord Hastings' administration, his conduct in other respects would enable us to pronounce him a great man.

* The Joar is [illegible] of desperation in cases of extremity. They set fire to their houses, slay their children, and perish in the wreck of their property.

LETTER IV.

I shall now occupy your time with a few observations on the Company's army; without meaning to enter upon a detail of its numbers or strength. I shall make such mention of it as may amuse you, without tiring you by ' tails. Military affairs are managed by a mili card of which the commander in chief is pr nt. The Company's army is nposed of European troops and native Seapoys, commanded by European officers; it is as well equipped, fed, and taken care of, as any army in the world; indeed, private soldiers in India enjoy every comfort which men in such a sit tion can possibly expect; good nourishing foo legant clothing, and commodious lod ve to render their lot agreeable. In the have h constantly successful t frequently ill-con- prnces which has been ed to them; likewise against the disciplined talions commanded by French officers, which have, on several occasic opposed a sanguinary resistance to our troop hat it is to be hoped they would not shrink ro he most formidable enemy. I speak here of he Seapoys only; and what renders this opinio obable is, that these troops have distinguished themselves on more

than one occasion when opposed to European
At the capture of Java they behaved very gallantly
and proved that their enervating climate has not
disqualified them for the duties of soldiers. In
the late war, their most formidable opponents were
Arabs, who were employed as mercenaries by the
native princes; and I have read in the narrative
of an India officer, they were sometimes panic-
struck at sight of these Mussulmans. Although
undisciplined, the Arabs are well armed, accus-
tomed to war from an early age and their attack
is so furious, that the firmest soldiers might be
daunted by it; hence, in conflicts with them, our
troops generally suffered severely: I state it, as
the observation of an officer, that our Seapoys
were rather intimidated at sight of Arabs, un-
less well supported, or equal in number ild
be mentioned, however, that th ns
found them very formidable, and b ery
hot work when engaged w
thus state, *pro* and *con*, re
the Seapoys, it must be allowed they are
sessed of courage sufficient to cope with
enemy we are likely to meet in Hindostan, as
long as they are headed by British officers, and
faithful to our interests. I shall now animadvert
briefly on the Company's officers:—When a
young cadet comes f England, he has heard,
like other people, of Indian luxuries, and

has generally his head stuffed full of the fine things that are to be met with there; after landing, he is charmed with the variety of new sights, the faces, customs, every thing different from what he has witnessed before; but he is posted to a battalion, ordered to a distant station, and the bubble bursts. Although an officer's pay in the Company's service is handsome, it will go but a short way to procure him luxuries; indeed, for many years, he will be barely able to live comfortably; for as promotion goes by seniority, and is consequently very slow, he cannot expect to obtain command of a company in less than sixteen years; and, until that period, an officer without any appointment is but indifferently off. The expences for servants, for show, and for idleness, are so numerous, that his pay [illegible] consumed by them, and very little [illegible] him wines or articles of real [illegible] a distance from Calcutta, [illegible]very thing [illegible]hat kind is extremely [illegible] In India, a European assumes, or endeavours to assume, the establishment of a gentleman; and this rage for show extends to all orders; so that officers who are gentlemen, and respectable from their situations, are compelled to struggle between the prevailing taste and a narrow income; in order to comply with the

one, and not exceed the other. Thus, then, subalterns in the Company's service live, during a long period, in a state of genteel poverty, anxiously longing for war, to cause casualties and accelerate their promotion. In the meantime they are on the alert, ready to take advantage of any opportunity which may present itself for bettering their condition. Of these, the most common is, forming a connexion with some mercantile house in Calcutta. If an officer, through letters of recommendation, or other means, can procure a handsome employment, or support from one of these merchants, he resigns the service, *sans ceremonie*, and becomes a man of business; so that one is constantly meeting in agents' offices, auction rooms, and shops, with military men. Pretty soldiers these, you will say; I shall only observe, that interest sways all orders of [illegible] in India equally; all think of amassing [illegible] within a certain period, in order to enjoy it at home. This [illegible] magnet [illegible] their wishes turn, and for which they labour, with unabated ardour, under the scorching sun of India. A lac, two lacks, would consummate their wishes, and enable them to descend the hill of life, in the land, to the tomb of their fathers. The spell of country extends over oceans, and binds amidst the feelings dearest to the heart, regard for that soil

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business on hand than it can dispose of; suits owd upon suits; litigants throng in from all rters, and grasp at the balance of justice ıre those dissensions which, more vivacious he hydra's heads, are eternally springing up gst them,—the endless progeny of avarice elfishness. Brothers quarrel with brothers their inheritance, uncles with nephews, s with cousins, and by trick or bribery endvour to gain sole possession of that which they n enjoy, in common with their relatives.

"Ille Angulos,
Alieni Agri, mihi delectat—"

is here the cause of ten thousand lawsuits. Lands are not divided and enclosed by fences here as in England, but lie in an open regular plain, intersected by small elevated banks, or else cuts, which serve as meres between different men's possessions.

These landmarks are, of course, well-known and settled by time; however, if one party wish to encroach upon the other, he begins ploughing his neighbour's lands, produces some understrappers to give evidence in his favour, and a lawsuit ensues between the parties. Again, if two cousins have got a village left by their grandfather between them, and one be of an intriguing temper, he will not scruple to dispute his relation's rig'

and perhaps reduce both to beggary by a law-suit. Villages are often divided into small shares and left among numerous relations—then the contest begins. Uncles, nephews, cousins jostle one another in the fray, as each endeavors to become sole proprietor, or possess his kinsman's share. Lawsuits are carried on, and matters frequently terminated by the ruin of these senseless litigants. When circumstances permit, wills are forged among the natives, bequeathing property, to which the pretended legatee is not entitled. In cases where money has been lent, false receipts are sometimes forged to cancel the obligation. In fine, perjury is made use of, bribery is made use of, and forgery is made use of in these proceedings without shame or remorse. Perjury, in particular, is practised to such an extent in India, that a European who has not been there, or one not intimately acquainted with the natives, would not credit the fact; for a few rupees will procure abundant evidence upon any point a man wishes to have attested. When parties go to court, instead of depending upon the justice of their cause, their first consideration is to bribe the judge's omlahs, and to rest their hopes of success principally upon this, whilst they use their influence in favor of that person who has given the largest bribe. It will be necessary

here, to explain the manner in which that influence is exercised. The mode in which evidence is taken is this:—a witness makes his deposition to one of these omlahs, who writes it down and reads it to the judge; he looks over it, asks the witness a few questions, and dismisses him. Thus the writer of this evidence, if he has received a bribe, may make material alterations without being detected: for making allowance on account of the judge's carelessness, and timidity of the witness, the chances of concealment are entirely in his favour.

Further, when the evidence of both parties is examined, perhaps ten men are found swearing upon one side and ten upon the other; so that a judge must be perplexed which way to determine, and unless he is a man of deep sagacity, fit to discover truth from the nature of the facts, he will be completely at a loss. In these cases an omlah's opinion will sway him; nay, there are judges take their decisions frequently from the omlah's mouth. Where the omlah is a sharp, shrewd man, (which they all are) and the judge a soft one, between flattery and cleverness the former gains an ascendancy almost unlimited over the latter. With all the sycophancy of slaves, these men possess great ambition, so that nothing is more common than their governing those Euro-

peans under whom they serve. Indeed I have known instances among commercial men, where this amounted almost to infatuation; and the European could not transact the least affair without advice from his native Mentor: however he has often occasion to repent it, and finds himself duped by the other's artifices. These circumstances, therefore, give native servants in a Company's court oftentimes great weight; they performly receive bribes; the parties at law always offer them; and thus a system of corruption is carried on, which cannot be remedied. Again, the Thannedars, whom I have already mentioned, form another class of judicial plunderers, and exercise the petty authority with which they are endowed within their division, for the purpose of private emolument. The most lucrative duty they have to perform, is to examine into, and make a report of circumstances that have occurred within their division to the judge. I shall state a case to illustrate this, which is not altogether hypothetical. Thus, A. and B. are pupils or adopted sons of an old Faker C. who is possessed of property; A. is the real heir, and has got a will made out in his favour by C., which, however, he neglects to register. B. taking advantage of this neglect, forges a will in his own favour clandestinely, and bribes a man to personate their

superior before the Cazi who registers it. After ...'s demise, a lawsuit commences; then the judge ...ers the Thannedar of that division, in which ...parties reside, to ascertain whether C. left his ...n at the time specified by B. in order to re... his testament. The registry is made in that ... where the court resides. The Thannedar ... an examination, and receives three hundred ...s from A., in whose favour he writes twenty ...nesses; from B. he receives five hundred, and ...rites thirty witnesses in his favour. The report ...oes to court, both parties have abundant evi...dence, and the affair is rendered more intricate than at first. Thannedars, also, have handsome emoluments from petty offenders, whom they frighten or chastise until a bribe is produced; from great offenders, whom they allow to escape upon paying a sum proportionate to their demerits, and from pound-money for cattle confined for trespass, which belongs to the Company, but which, these gentlemen contrive to pocket themselves. Although corruption is so frequent among the natives of India in office, you are not to suppose they are unshackled by restraint: on the contrary, they are bound by numerous oaths and regulations; but these, like the fillets of the Philistines, this Sampson shakes off, and stalks forth with undiminished strength. The Company's

courts are divided into district, or Zillah courts, provincial courts, or courts of appeal, and a board of civil and criminal justice in Calcutta.

I shall now direct your attention to fourzdary or criminal court. A civil servant, the circuit judge, holds it at regular terms, like assizes courts; and it differs, in this respect, the civil court, which is permanent in its sit The laws in India are extremely mild regai criminals, so that murder is almost the only cri punishable with death. Robbery, burglary, maiming, assault, perjury, are all punished by fines, imprisonment, or working on the roads; and from the overwhelming evidence necessary for conviction, culprits often escape. Circumstantial evidence here goes for nothing; and less than two witnesses will not convict a man upon any criminal charge. If a robber, for instance, break into a person's house, be seen and recognized by one of the family, and escape before others have seen him also, he cannot be charged upon the one man's evidence. If a man be assaulted by one or more of his neighbours, without two witnesses, he can have no redress. From this results a species of impunity to evil doers, so that notorious robbers often carry on their practices for years without being brought to punishment; also, the injured party is hereby induced to suborn false

witnesses, in order to obviate this legal impediment, and obtain redress. The punishment for gery is peculiar and expressive of Indian feelas regards disgraceful inflictions, which exa man to contempt. The offender is mounted an ass, with his head to the tail, and con- by a person who proclaims his crime. by boys, overwhelmed by mockery and rom all sides, he is led in slow procession the town. After having served as a butt al ridicule and contempt; he is relieved his disagreeable situation, and set at liberty. s punishment, ludicrous in itself, is, however, rrible to the natives, many of whom have been known to commit suicide in order to escape it, or n consequence of the disgrace it has entailed on ; various offences are punished by whipping or fi , which go, not to the injured party, but to the Co ny's coffers, and from which a considerable reven e must be derived. Great offenders, such as those who have been frequently convicted for robbery, who belong to organised banditti, called dekoits, are sent to Calcutta and imprisoned for life. I have seen the prison in which these malefactors are immured, and, excepting the irons they wear, and walls by which they are surrounded, it has very little the appearance of a w te. The building is a handsome one, surNe ded by a large court or yard, in which there oun

is a tank of water; every thing is neat, comfortable, almost elegant, and reflects high credit upo those who have the management of them. Su a prison as this would form a fine contrast the cells and dungeons to which men fa criminal are confined in Europe; and shews in India, humanity is nobly extended to th degraded of our species. The prisoners plentiful subsistence by their own labo pass that life, which has been heretofor with crimes, in a quiet seclusion fr th without annoyance and without pain. I now briefly notice the supreme court, which king's court, in which a chief justice presides, a sisted by puisne judges; but owing to casualties the duty of which is frequently performed by a single judge. As it differs in no respect from a king's court in England, there is nothing novel to describe; it is the highest court in India, and all appeals from its decision are carried to England. Amongst the gentlemen of the Calcutta bar, Mr. F—n is conspicuous, both as an ornament to it, and to his profession. His eloquence is copious, energetic, and persuasive; his sentiments generous and liberal, whilst the ardour of his manner denotes an internal consciousness of the justice of his cause which impresses conviction on the auditory. However, it is time to quit gossiping, and conclude this long letter.

LETTER VI.

The principal revenue its government derives from Bengal, is through the medium of a land-tax or rent. Different mercantile commodities pay a duty on going to Calcutta; also, there are taxes of a local nature, such as those on pilgrims at Geia or Jagernauth; these are monopolies. However, a land-tax is the leading and general tax or rent paid to government. In India it is a maxim of long antiquity, acquiesced in by all, that the sovereign is proprietor of the soil; he imposes and he remits rents; he gives leases of lands that pay revenue, and makes grants to favourites, or, as a reward for service, of jagheer, which is exempt from revenue. During the Mogul dynasty, although the emperor's power was absolute, and his order a law, the customs of the country, nevertheless prevailed; its usages were respected, and kept their ground against arbitrary power. The grants made by former emperors were confirmed by their successors, unless forfeited on account of rebellion; jagheers were hereditary; sons succeeded their fathers as certainly as in England; lands paid a reasonable rent, which could not be wantonly raised by the avarice of superiors: in short, though the maxims

of government were despotic, its practices were humane. When the reins were held by efficient hands; when such a man as Shaw Jehan, or Aurungzebe became emperor, the people were happy and well governed; but, when weak princes assumed the sway, misfortune entered at every avenue; petty chiefs, swollen into tyrants, marked their ephemeral rule, by dispensing misery to all around them; their reign of a day vied in evil with the regular government of years, and anarchy strewed thorns around that goaded every one. Custom in India is all-powerful; if one produce a precedent for any thing he wishes to effect, and shew it has been done before, people acquiesce; if not, if it is an innovation, every one cries out against it—"It's not the custom of our country;" is considered by them a decisive objection. I have heard, Lord Moira attempted to establish a house-tax, but this was not the custom; people would not submit to it, and the point was wisely given up. Lands in India are distributed among villages, for each has got a certain space of ground annexed to it, so that instead of purchasing an estate, you purchase a village. That civil servant whose duty it is to receive the revenue, is called a collector; the names of all villages within the district are enrolled in his books, and revenue specified payable by each. In the col-

lector's court there are native omlahs and writers similar to those in the magistrate's; there are also native officers, called commissioners, who are stationed in the different pergunnas, or divisions, and resemble Thannedars, not only in the duties they have to perform, but in their venal temper and conduct. The board of revenue manages this branch of the Company's establishment. Of revenue paid by a landholder, the tenth, called malkhonua, is returned, and is supposed by government to be the only profit derived from his village. The regulations respecting collection are very strict, as the villages of any landholder who neglects paying his revenue for a certain period, are put up to auction; out of the proceeds the company pays itself, and the proprietor receives the residue. This measure is all-efficient, and in consequence of it, the Company's revenues are punctually paid. It is considered disgraceful to lose possession of a village left by one's ancestors; so that the proprietor will stretch every nerve in order to pay his rent; further, landed property is in high estimation, owing to the confidence placed in our government, and to the respect the authority it conveys among the natives themselves, so that a man will much sooner part with his money than with it; nay, if any other procedure were substituted, imprisonment, whipping, torture, or

what you will, numerous defaulters would be found. Avarice is the strongest passion an Indian possesses; to gratify it he will endure any privation, live poorly, dress meanly, and deny himself every comfort in order to amass money. Among men so disposed, there are hundreds would prefer lingering in a prison, provided they could retain their wealth, to all the sweets of liberty, with loss of it; I speak not now chimerically, for under the Mogul government this was a common case. Imprisonment and torture were then resorted to, when a landlord turned refractory and refused his rent, but frequently without effect; for though he should perish under the rod of power, his money would be preserved to his family. But sale by auction admits of no subterfuge, the money must be paid, or his land will be dissevered and go to another; there is no sweet mercy to plead in extenuation and demand delay, no alternative admitted. The leases granted under Warren Hastings' administration, are generally very moderate, and, in many cases, allow immense profit to the holder at the present day; to this, various causes contribute. A considerable change has occurred since that period, in the value of all articles of consumption; also, the country was then in an unsettled state, it was a new acquisition, and consequently lands

would not rate so high as they do now, that the government is firmly established. At that time, too, great corruption prevailed among the Company's servants; so that those commissioners appointed to superintend the settlement of villages were often bribed to connive at proceedings advantageous to the landholder; however, this does not happen now. The Company, at present, resume jagheers when they can do it with any propriety, as, for instance, on the death of an incumbent: many of them are spurious, are not registered in the imperial books, and were never granted by the emperor, but have obtained exemption, in the first instance, through the fraud or collusion of persons in office. In case of resumption, the village, or property, is put up to auction, and, by competition, is sometimes raised to a sum which exceeds its real value. Beside jagheer, which was generally a reward for military services, there is a species of free land, called minhei, or nizamut, attached to religious houses. There are many of these endowments belonging to Pagodas at the present day, which have been granted by individuals, as legacies are left to monasteries in Roman Catholic countries.

Thus the proprietor of a village makes over to a certain Pagoda, one hundred acres of land,

which is to be rent-free; in this case the village is diminished in value, proportionate to the quantity given; so that the loss falls upon the owner and his heirs. Having said so much on the different tenures, I shall now direct your attention to the landholders themselves, called zemindars, who constitute the aristocracy of India. These are a class of haughty, turbulent, intriguing men, who enjoy great respect and some authority among their villagers; however, this part of the subject, which relates to their internal regulations and subordination, I shall defer treating of distinctly till another time. The zemindar lets his lands out to inferior tenants, called ryots, who hold leases from him, and pay in proportion to the quantity of land they cultivate. It is the general practice for ryots to pay their rents in money; however, there is another mode sometimes resorted to, called buttai or payment in kind. In this case the proportion settled between a landlord and tenant is seven puseries of grain to the former, and six to the latter, giving the proprietor a small dividend more than the cultivator. This practice is at present little in use, as money payments are more convenient to both parties. The value of lands is estimated according to the crop they produce. Thus, rice lands pay the zemindar a greater rent than high ground, which only gives

corn crops. Tobacco land also pays more, which lies in the vicinity of the village, and is very rich. Beside the rent of lands, zemindars derive a profit from fruit-trees, such as the mango, from fishing ponds, and from marriages among their ryots. Every zemindar holds a village court, called his kutchery, in which the villagers assemble to pay their rent, settle their accounts, and adjust all disputes among each other. In this the zemindar presides, and receives, with lordly consequence, the homage of inferiors. Haughty in his gait and air, the native pride of his temper is nourished by the incense of dependents; so that amidst the submissive forms and sycophancy of his country, the zemindar of India is a proud, an able, and an aspiring man.

Your's, &c.

LETTER VII.

Some time after Lord Hastings' departure from India, the press underwent such a material change, owing to a new regulation of the government, that I think it necessary to direct your attention toward it, and the causes which led to it. From the first establishment of our power in

India until Lord Moira's government, a censorship had been imposed upon the press, and its proceedings were watched with a jealous eye. During this period, editors were cautious in reflecting upon government, or the authorities at all; for the regulations pressed so strictly upon them, that such a freedom would have been productive of their own ruin. Lord Moira, actuated by a regard for the principles of liberty, abolished this censorship, and by presenting the Indian press with a portion of freedom, dissolved that spell which had hitherto bound up its energies, and fettered its proceedings. About this period Mr.B—m started up—a traveller in Palestine, an adventurer, a man acquainted with the world; his conduct has been made the subject of various charges and attacks by enemies; these I shall pass by without accusing or without exculpating him upon points with which I am not thoroughly acquainted. This gentleman has got a Quixotic spark in him, and delights in perilous adventures for distressed damsels, and dangerous encounters with windmill giants. He first issued a prospectus which praised himself not a little, and reflected upon other editors; which contained a pompous annunciation of qualifications and heads of intelligence; a high sounding forerunner of his embryo paper; his abilities were held forth as

guarantees of good management, by himself. Mr. B—m commenced his paper, the Journal, at six rupees per month; and carried it on in a style, perhaps, superior to any paper that had appeared before. His politics were of the radical caste—he made some bold attacks on the local authorities; came off triumphant in a prosecution for publishing a libel; censured the conduct and exposed the actions of individuals, oftentimes, in a most unjustifiable manner; the Journal was a censor and a novelty; became popular, and he raised its price, finally, to sixteen rupees. Mr. B.'s writings, upon several occasions, gave Lord Hastings umbrage, and provoked the condemnation of government; however, his lordship had his character to preserve, and would not incur a stain upon it, by any thing like an arbitrary act. After Lord Hastings' departure from India, it was known that Mr. Adam, who succeeded him, *pro tempore*, and the other members of government, were, from principle, inimical to the freedom of the press; and also personally hostile to Mr. B., owing to an attack which had been made on them formerly, through the medium of his paper. Of course Mr. B.'s situation became critical. Before or about this period, letters had appeared in the John Bull newspaper, bringing those charges to which I have alluded against Mr. B—m, the

author of which was unknown; but it was supposed Mr. B—e, the Scotch clergyman, was concerned in writing or correcting them. By way of retaliation, Mr. B—m published a letter in the Journal, attacking Mr. B—e, for having accepted the situation of clerk of the Company's stationary. It consisted of mere common-place objections, founded upon his religious duties; and displayed animosity, rather than inflicted injury on Mr. B—e or his character. Government laid hold of this, and ordered him to quit the country, for publishing, what they termed, a profane writing—*nefanda et impia vox.* The editor of the Journal had numerous partizans; among them the alarm was sounded; he was spirited, he was patriotic according to these gentlemen's report; he became popular. You must be aware, that persons born in India, whether native or mixed descent, are not subject to transmission like Europeans, but if they give offence by their conduct or writings, must be proceeded against in a court of justice. Mr. B. took advantage of this circumstance, appointed an Anglo-Indian as the editor of his paper, and during the interval allowed before his departure, attacked the heads of government for their conduct to him. Writings appeared daily in his paper, accusing or satirizing them; he was angry, and acted like an angry man by holding

out threats of exposure and prosecution in England. Among other schemes of annoyance he entertained, was one of establishing a paper at home, which would insert communications from India upon every subject, and be circulated in that country. He made this plan public, and obtained a number of subscriptions for carrying it into effect; all idea of prudence or reserve seemed abandoned amidst the suggestions of passion, by making known his hostile intentions. Government were stimulated and enabled to counteract them. They made a regulation, in consequence, from which the following are extracts:

A regulation for preventing the establishment of printing presses without license, and for restraining, under certain circumstances, the circulation of printed books and papers; passed by the governor-general in council on the 5th April, 1823.

Preamble.—Whereas it is deemed expedient to prohibit, within the territories immediately subordinate to the presidency of Fort William, the future establishment of printing presses, and the use of any such presses, or of types or other materials for printing, except with the previous sanction and license of government, under suitable provisions to guard against abuse; and whereas it may be judged proper to prohibit the circulation, within the territories aforesaid, of particular newspapers,

printed books, or papers of any description, whether the same may be printed in the town of Calcutta or elsewhere; the following rules have been enacted, to be in force from the date of their promulgation within the territories immediately subordinate to the presidency of Fort William.

II. No person shall print any book or paper, or shall keep or use any printing press or types, or other materials or articles for printing, without having obtained the previous sanction and license of the governor-general in council for that purpose; and any person who shall print any book or paper, or shall keep or use any printing press or types, or other materials or articles for printing, without having obtained such license, shall be liable, on conviction before the magistrate or joint magistrate of the jurisdiction in which such offence may be committed, to a pecuniary fine not exceeding one thousand rupees; commutable, if not paid, to imprisonment without labour, for a period not exceeding six months.

III. The magistrates and joint magistrates are further authorized and directed to seize and attack all printing presses and types, and other materials or articles for printing, which may be kept or used within their respective jurisdictions without the permission and license of government, and to retain the same (together with any printed

books or papers found on the premises) under attachment, to be confiscated, or otherwise disposed of, as the governor-general in council (to whom an immediate report shall be made in all such cases) may direct; and if any magistrate or joint magistrate shall, on credible evidence, or circumstances of strong presumption, have reason to believe that such unlicensed printing presses or types, or other materials or articles for printing, are kept or used in any house, building or other place, he is authorized to issue his warrant to the police officers to search for the same, in the mode prescribed in the rules for the entry and search of dwelling-houses, contained in clauses fifth, sixth, and seventh, section xvi., regulation xx., 1817.

IV. Whenever any person or persons shall be desirous of keeping or using any printing press, or types, or other materials, or articles for printing, he or they shall state the same by a written application to the magistrate or joint magistrate of the jurisdiction, in which it may be proposed to establish such printing press. The application shall specify the real and true name and profession, caste, or religion, age, and place of abode of every person or persons who are (or are intended to be) the printers and publishers, and the proprietors of such printing press or types, or other

materials or articles for printing, and the place where such printing press is to be established; and the facts so stated in the application shall be verified on oath, or on solemn obligation, by the persons therein named as the printers, publishers or proprietors, or by such of them as the magistrate or joint magistrate may think it expedient to select for that purpose.

V. The magistrate or joint magistrate shall then forward a copy of such application (with a translation, if it be not in the English language) to the governor-general in council, who, after calling for any further information which may be deemed necessary, will grant or withhold the license at his discretion.

VI. If the license shall be granted, the magistrate or joint magistrate will deliver the same to the parties concerned, and will apprize them, both verbally and in writing, of the conditions which government may in each instance think proper to attach to such license.

VII. The governor-general in council reserves to himself the full power of recalling and resuming any such license, whenever he may see fit to do so. Such recal will be communicated by the magistrate or joint magistate, by a written notice, to be delivered at the house, office, or place named in the application, as that at which the

printing press was to be established, or at any other house, office, or place to which such printing press may, with the previous knowledge and written sanction of the magistrate or joint magistrate, have been immediately removed.

XI. Any persons subject to the authority of the zillah and city courts, who, after notice of such prohibition, shall knowingly and wilfully circulate, or cause to be circulated, sell, or cause to be sold, or deliver out or distribute, or in any manner cause to be distributed, at any place within the territories subordinate to the presidency of Fort William, any newspaper, or any printed book or paper of any description so prohibited, shall, on conviction before the magistrate or joint magistrate of the jurisdiction in which the offence may be committed, be subject for the first offence to a fine not exceeding one hundred rupees, commutable, if not paid, to imprisonment without labour for a period not exceeding two months; and for the second, and each and every subsequent offence, to a fine not exceeding two hundred rupees, commutable to imprisonment without hard labour, for a period not exceeding four months.

Upon a review of these proceedings, although Mr. B—m's conduct exhibits nothing very wise or very amiable, we cannot sufficiently censure the arbitrary conduct of the Indian government which

annihilated the freedom of the press, owing to the excesses of an individual.

When this boon was first granted to India, it surely could not be contemplated, that a libeller would never spring up; the contrary must have been known, and measures should have been taken to meet such an exigence. Whilst government is armed with the penalties of the libel law, and summary power of transmission, no European can offend with impunity; if a lenient jury should let him escape, they still possess a rod of correction. India differs from England in almost every point—its tenure, its fealty, its administration; the same degree of liberty, the same usages, the same laws, do not answer them alike: whilst, then, I would grant her a free press, I would arm government with a power to defend itself against aggression. But it already possesses this over Europeans by the right of transmission; give it one equally summary over natives, and the danger evaporates; entrust it with the power of fine or imprisonment to a limited extent, in cases of libellous attack upon its members, or acts, through a specific decree to be approved or cancelled by the supreme court, then no other restraint is necessary; a person born in India cannot be made use of to screen Europeans, by reason of the penalty he incurs himself, and

people might be allowed to publish what they please. I shall not trouble you with prolix arguments about the freedom of the press, but glance briefly at this threadbare thesis. There is no representative assembly in India to express the wishes of the people, and to expose grievances of a particular or general nature. All authority, whether legislative or executive, is centred in the local government without any thing like a counteracting influence upon the spot, and subject only to the powers at home. We have assumed over our Indian territories an authority equal to what the emperors exercised, without a condition annexed that may temper its tyranny; in such a state of things a free press is the only barrier against abuses, fit to resist their domineering, and oppose their progress. Residents, commanders, judges, collectors, all stand in awe of its lash; and whilst a restraint is placed on its licentiousness, as regards the ruling powers, sufficient room may be left for the exposure of iniquities. Every individual under the Indian government possesses considerable power, and finds opportunity to commit numerous abuses in the exercise of his functions, but exposure will intimidate him: as long as he is surrounded by secresy and concealment, there is a wide field for mal-practices; but let the light in, he will shrink from it with

horror, and desist through the fear of public disgrace. Therefore, as regards the great servants of government, or its inferior agents, a free press is a necessary institution. The Mogul emperors, in their proudest day of power and lordly sway, stood in awe of the historian's pen, and often refrained from ill actions only because their relation would disgrace them with the public and with posterity; and shall we liberate the British government almost as absolute; its sultan, vizier, subahs, nabobs, omrous, shall we liberate them all from such a terror? Every rule of policy, every feeling of justice forbids it. I am no friend to licentiousness; I do not wish to see the Indian government exposed to mockery and insult, for this would sap the foundations of our power in that country, but I would not have it an autocrat; men in office are sufficiently screened by it from punishment, where they act amiss, without being wrapped up in secresy, and concealed from the indignation which they often merit. To observe, in conclusion, government has the power of transmission over Europeans, which is a stretch of authority it must be cautious in using; give it the power to fine or imprison natives for libel against its component members or their public acts, by a specific decree, subject to the dictum of the supreme court, which is another stretch of autho-

rity it must be cautious in using, and let the press be free; permit people to publish what they will upon their personal hazard, and do not rivet it with nails of iron. Beside the Journal, there are two other daily papers, the Hurkaru and John Bull; the former of these professes liberal politics, and supports them very lamely indeed; inserts articles out of the Sydney Gazette, about bush-rangers, missionaries, and the like; publishes letters that have attained the acme of stupidity; copies paragraphs that have appeared in the Journal, and may be called a poor imitation of it, totally devoid of interest or amusement. The John Bull was set up by some rich civilians in opposition to the Journal, but has never had much success; it has changed its editors repeatedly in a few months, and is at present under the management of a gentleman, whose writings are not very conspicuous for argument, elegance, or sense.

Your's, &c.

LETTER VIII.

The Company's civil servants enjoy, from the highest to the lowest, important and responsible situations; by them the civil duties of our Indian empire are performed, and they possess the most lucrative, as well as most honourable offices the country contains. The management of internal affairs is committed to boards, which are composed, almost exclusively, of persons who serve under the Company, in a civil or military capacity; these are—the Military Board, the Board of Revenue, the Board of Trade, and the Board of Civil and Criminal Justice; so that, in a military, fiscal, commercial, and judicial point of view, they are the efficient managers and administrators of the country; even the inferior and subaltern offices in this service are important, and the chain, from the highest link to the lowest, is respectable. The members of council, secretaries, residents, and heads of departments, who hold leading posts, enjoy a salary from eight thousand rupees per month downward, and keep up magnificent establishments; experience and local knowledge make them necessary assistants to a governor-general; standing high in trust, and high in authority, the wheel of government, upon

common occasions, is moved chiefly by their influence, and affairs are entrusted principally to their management. From a long residence in India, they are deeply imbued with its manners, and acquire something like the pride of nabobs, in their notions of self-importance. Accustomed to a luxurious style of living, which equals that of noblemen in England; to authority over a numerous population; to flattery and submission from underlings, they often acquire a despotic habit of thinking and acting, totally inconsistent with genuine freedom. Among these gentlemen a free press is the greatest evil that can happen to India. Why?—Because they stand in awe of it. The slumbering ennui of silence delights them, because it throws a veil over their actions; any thing in the shape of freedom; any thing that resists their will is disagreeable; they require unlimited submission. Having stated their leading characteristic, there is no occasion to go out of the way in order to find recent proofs of it; their conduct regarding the press, when Lord Hastings left India, is abundant testimony on this subject. In my opinion an old Indian should never be entrusted with the reins of government in that country: the tone of his mind is too absolute to hold them with moderation. From Lord Clive down to the present day, no Company's servant,

who has held that high office, ever displayed the moderation which characterized Cornwallis, Minto, and Moira. A man educated in Britain, who has lived in Britain, who justly appreciates the value of liberty, is requisite to restrain the despotic temper which prevails in India; the home authorities should endeavour to have a successor upon the spot, before his predecessor has left that country, in order to prevent an inter-reign; civil servants do very well as civil servants, but very ill as governors.

Magistrates, or judges, and collectors, form another branch of the Company's establishment, and are dispersed among the various districts, in discharge of their duties. The district attached to a judge's or collector's court is often very extensive, and from the authority of their office, and connexion with all classes of natives, they are always respected among them. Thus a rajah or great zemindar, who has got numerous causes pending in court, endeavours, by attendance and obsequiousness, to gain a personal interest with the judge. He sends him nezirs or presents, which this latter in most cases rejects on account of the oaths by which he is bound, and visits him in state, with a train of elephants and followers upon occasions of ceremony. Again, poor people respect him, because he is the person whose

power is most immediate and most felt by them. Government is at a distance; the military do not interfere with them, and the judge is the person to whose decision their interests are subjected; his power is seen and felt by them upon all occasions, where the interference of a superior is requisite, he is in their eyes an important personage. His accommodations, attendance, and manner of living are sumptuous, in order to support the respectability attached to his station. These gentlemen, when appointed to a healthy district possess enviable situations, sufficient to gratify the ambition of any moderate man. Inferior to them are registers and assistants, who are steps of the same grade; commercial residents, who manage the Company's factories, and are employed in mercantile affairs; however, I shall pass them over, and proceed to writers who are the junior members of the civil service. These young gentlemen, generally the sons of respectable families, have received the rudiments of a good education at home; perhaps the height of their ambition and extent of their means in England was to purchase a dandy coat, and strut upon the flags; or on a journey to the country, to travel in a mail-coach. But in India how altered!—Arabs, English blood-horses, Pegu ponies, curricles and phætons, come prancing before them with most bewitching fas-

cination. Their pay, three hundred rupees per month, is quite sufficient to keep them respectably, but not at all sufficient to purchase all these fine things. How are they to be procured?—These young gentlemen who have got excellent situations in expectancy, upon their arrival in Calcutta, generally find some wealthy baboo to advance them large sums at an exorbitant interest, or else obtain a credit with some house of agency; so that like young birds, which dirty their wings in the mire, and are rendered incapable of flying, these youngsters incur a burthen, galling to them many a day afterwards; they make their appearance at the course on high-mettled horses, or in equipages; go to balls, dressed out in all the puppyism of dandies; keep the first company; drink claret and champagne; have houses at Garden Reach; in fine, live far beyond their means; debts accumulate, and the economising judge often regrets the follies of the writer. There is a college founded by that liberal and high-minded nobleman, the Marquis of Wellesley, to which these young men are attached, for learning the languages of India; here Arabic, Persian, Sanscrit, Hindostanee, and the other dialects are taught. Every writer must make some proficiency in them, and undergo an examination, before he can be appointed to any employment; there are

some who live within their income, attend to their studies, and are sure to be rewarded with speedy appointments; young men of capacity are not uncommon among them; so that, endowed with classic and eastern literature, they possess a variety of knowledge not sought after, and not obtained in Europe. To sum up these young gentlemen's character, barring the ridiculous extravagance to which I have alluded, their manners are in other respects inoffensive. The innocent levities of foppery and voluptuous lounge, supersede those rows and quarrels so frequent among young men in Europe. The acerbity of boyish humours mellows into mildness amidst those enjoyments by which they are surrounded; and they possess as much refinement as young men can be expected to have. Medical men form a branch of the Company's establishment, receive salaries, and are distributed among the different districts like civil servants. These gentlemen, after having taken their diplomas in England, and with, perhaps, a very moderate degree of experience, go out to India to practise their profession. Every country has its peculiar diseases, and a man must be practically acquainted with them, in order to treat them properly; between those of England and India the greatest difference exists, and a different treatment is, of course, ne-

cessary, the knowledge of which can only be acquired by experience and a residence in the country, so that, generally speaking, medical men on their first arrival are very unfit for the duties they undertake. In India the progress of disease is so rapid, so overwhelming, that decision is absolutely necessary in a medical man, strong measures alone will be found efficient in most cases, but from want of this knowledge, these new-comers keep piddling their patient with a dose of salts or some other dose, till he slips through their fingers. I shall here suggest what I conceive would be a wise proceeding on the part of the Company: they should oblige all medical men, newly arrived, to walk the hospital until they had acquired a sufficient knowledge of Indian diseases; they should oblige them to pass an examination before the medical board, prior to their being appointed to any situation. Were this plan adopted, many a worthy man would be saved to the community—many an industrious one to his family. I think the appointment of novices to medical situations of trust is as preposterous as it would be to appoint young gentlemen, newly arrived, to civil situations, without knowing any thing of the languages and institutes of India. Although many people may differ in opinion with me upon other points, I presume

those who have been in India will agree with me on this, that an establishment where young surgeons, newly arrived from England, might attend, and acquire a competent knowledge of Indian diseases, would be a desirable and laudable institution, instead of being let loose, as it were, upon the public, without any previous train of preparation. There are surgeon merchants, surgeon agents, &c. in Calcutta, who wander about from profession to profession, as Saul, the son of Kish, wandered after his father's asses, but seldom find any that suits them, because, in fact, they are not fit for any. I shall here briefly discuss a question which has been often agitated, viz.—the propriety of a reduction in the salaries of civil servants. Those who are advocates for such a reduction are actuated by economical motives, and the desire to curtail what they conceive to be a profligate expenditure; however, these gentlemen, in their account of pounds, shillings, and pence, omit altogether the considerations of policy, wisdom, and propriety. As civil servants have all official duties to perform of high trust and consideration among the natives, a degree of respect attaches to their persons, which requires on their part an establishment and style of living proper to support this, and meet the expectations of the people. Now, if opinion be the grand cement and connecting

link of our Indian empire, what would the opinion of the native population be, if they saw their rulers —if they saw those who hold the most important situations among them, struggling with the difficulties of a narrow income—if every petty zemindar could outvie them in splendor—if the native servants under them could sneer at their poverty—if ostentatious display, to which the natives are so much addicted, were wholly abolished? The most profound contempt for us and our government. Therefore, on the ground of policy, I consider it would be highly improper to curtail a single shilling from the salaries of the Company's servants. If they hold important situations, it is necessary they should command a commensurate degree of respect, and without a suitable income it is impossible for them to do this. Further, it would be unwise to put men, having the ample opportunities for corruption they possess in a state of temptation, by confining them to penurious allowances. Even a person of sound principles would be shaken by the imperious call of necessity, whilst bribery would urge forward with open hand to load him with wealth. The pride of rank and office would bend before the humiliations of poverty, and the needy civilian would become a tool in the hands of those whose interest it might be to corrupt him. This is no painting—every man's

experience in the world must tell him of its truth. Necessity and temptation, the overwhelming temptation of Indian corruption, are guides fit to mislead, I might almost say, an honourable man. Besides these two grand considerations, which militate against reducing the salaries of the Company's servants, I don't know any class of men who are more deserving of liberal payment than they. When we consider the expenses of their education, of their outfit for India, of equipment on their arrival, the length of time they must study, the arduous duties they have to perform the leaving of home, of friends and relatives, for a country so prejudicial to European constitutions —when we consider these things, it does not require any great stretch of liberality to allow they should be well paid. If the Company wish for honourable and useful servants, they must be well paid.

Civilians are regarded by government with a jealous eye, and in case of misconduct are suspended or deprived of employment. When the offence is of a trivial nature, a person so suspended retires to Calcutta, and lives there, until government considers it sufficiently expiated, and puts him into office again; if, however, it be of a serious nature, such as receiving bribes, he

goes to Europe, and, perhaps, does not return again to India, as this will not be lightly overlooked. Owing to the strictness of government, and also to regard for their oaths, civil servants have generally pure hands, and discharge their duties uprightly: I do not mean to say that cases of bribery never occur, I have heard of instances, but these are rare compared to the extent of the service and number of persons employed. Formerly many persons acquired wealth, by disgraceful and dishonest practices variously exercised, according to their situation and circumstances; these were not the fair fruits of their service, but earnings of corruption; and some of the most splendid fortunes realized in India, would cover their possessor with shame, were the method of their acquisition made public. At present neither the same profits can be reaped, nor the same fortunes realized; government is well acquainted with the different avenues to corruption, and has blocked them up; so that a man may pass many years in India, possessed of a good situation, without being rich in the end. I shall conclude by assuring you that the Indian civil service is an excellent one; that it affords young men affluent and respectable situations, in which they may pass their lives happily, as far as

this is consistent with the climate and seclusion from home.

Your's, &c.

LETTER IX.

The Calcutta agents form a very prominent part of the community, and from their extensive mercantile connexions, occupy a large space in the public eye. These gentlemen, according to a bombastic mode of expression usual in India, are called, by way of eminence, the princely merchants of Calcutta. Indeed these princes of the desk and ledger are very fond of adulation, and take pride in the high-sounding epithets applied to them, by persons some twenty or fifty thousand rupees minus in their books. People in the east are addicted to pompous titles; the emperor's court abounded in "lights of the world, invincible swords, and supporters of the throne." I dare say these ledger princes, whose insignia should consist of a bale of cotton for a crown, and an indigo chest for a sceptre, by and by, will be metamorphosed into ornaments of our Indian empire, and mighty lords of the quill—high in dignity!—But a truce to levity, and let us examine

what the princely merchants are: during the war, Calcutta agency houses consisted of old establishments, which engrossed a great part of all commercial transactions, and might be termed a mercantile aristocracy. Possessed of large factories and numerous constituents through India, the trader was entirely dependent upon them, and an agent dictated his terms, from which there was no appeal. At present the case is different; inferior houses of agency have started up, new establishments have been formed, and an agent cannot dictate terms to persons possessed of some property, as they may have recourse to these inferior houses, so that the aristocracy is fast loosing its domineering ascendancy; they act as agents to civil servants, officers in the army, &c., and lend money to merchants or traders upon terms very favourable to themselves, so that it often happens, when these are losers by a speculation the agent is a gainer. During the war, when commercial men sometimes made their fortune by a happy incident, they charged forty, fifty, and ninety per cent, for money advanced; however, at present, that trade is dull, they are compelled to be more moderate, and content themselves with thirty. This exorbitant per centage they make out in the shape of interest for money, commissions, charges, godown rents, &c. which often startle and gall an unwary consti-

tuent. I have heard of cases where this latter has sat down full of satisfaction, and calculated a pretty little balance in his own favour, after allowing for the common interest of money; but this was reckoning without his host. He goes to his agent, requests his account, and starts at a debt which stares him in the face, more frightful than Hector's ghost was to pious Æneas. The agents have indigo factories, cotton factories, and other possessions in the interior, over which they appoint managers, and allow them a share in the concern, also a salary for their trouble; with these they adopt the same system as with speculators, so that managers are often involved in debt, whilst the agent's a gainer. This was the case with indigo planters for many years; they laboured, they sweated, and found themselves in the end playing a losing game; however, for the last two years, fortune has been propitious, and owing to the great rise in the price of that article, they are getting rich in spite of incumbrances. Constituents, without an independent property, are neither more nor less than servants to agents, related, recommended, or otherwise connected with these latter, who possess establishments which must be superintended by somebody, and into which these gentlemen are dubbed as managers, constituents, or servants. When a consti-

tuent is deeply in their books, and has not assets sufficient to pay them, they insure his life to the amount, so that his death, which may not be very distant in a climate like India, discharges all arrears. The *esprit du corps* among them displays itself in a very handsome and laudable manner; for if a respectable agency-house should get involved, owing to bad speculations, or other unfavourable circumstances, the rest step in to its aid, and advance money in the most liberal manner, in order to keep it from failing. Having thus stated some leading particulars respecting houses of agency, I shall now proceed to more general observations: their connexions extend among all orders of men in India, who either borrow from or deposit money with them, and draw upon them as circumstances require. They associate with persons of the highest rank with whom they are concerned in business, and receive numerous visitors in order to draw the ties of interest closer among their great friends. To persons under them their tone is high and arbitrary, not the moderation of an English merchant, but the loftiness of an Indian, so that a young man who would come on in their employment, should have a flexible back, and be skilled in the art of booing. They are men of the world, and keen in their dealings, but some of them possess unbounded generosity,

among whom the late A. C—n was, and Mr. P—r is conspicuous, whose too liberal conduct has been injurious to his interest. To conclude, the Calcutta agents are a class of very respectable men, very useful men, very proud men, and very selfish men; they serve many young fellows by giving them employment, and serve themselves by the conditions they impose. If they would affect less stateliness, and be what they are, simple merchants, they would be truly respected; by assuming the princely style, they are only despised.

Your's, &c.

LETTER X.

I shall just mention, and no more, some others among the people of business. Ship-builders, during the war, were in a very flourishing condition, and carried on extensive concerns; however, since that period, their trade has declined exceedingly; ships in Calcutta give scarce a fourth the price they would have done then, and the builders are at present embarrassed. Their docks are built upon the Hoogly, in the vicinity of Calcutta; the teak ships constructed in them, are

remarkable for strength, and last a much longer period than English ships. Wine-merchants, shopkeepers, manufacturers, and auctioneers, constitute another class of very respectable people, and form an extensive branch of the Calcutta citizens. Some of the wealthy ones among them sport a chariot, and kiss hands to their counter acquaintance on the course with the most awkward gentility; others give balls, suppers, and champagne to their friends, and support a very profuse style of living. The two first mentioned supply people in the interior with wines, hams, and the long etcetera of European luxuries; the last have extensive sales, and make fortunes rapidly by their business. The cargoes of ships, produce of the country, and articles of every kind, are sold by them, so that their concerns are both very extensive and very profitable. Coachmakers, tailors, jewellers, &c. have all profitable concerns, and make fortunes in a few years.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XI.

I shall now direct your attention to a class of men at present numerous, and increasing very fast in India, I mean Indo-Britons, or as they are often called, country born and half-caste men: these consist of the offspring from European and Indian parents, and also the progeny of country born persons who intermarry together; formerly they could hold commissions in the regular service, or civil appointments; and, as far as I am informed, did not labour under disabilities of any kind; however, their situation is now materially different; they are incapable of holding commissions in the regular service, or leading appointments; are admitted only to insignificant employments, and stand on the same footing as other natives: they are amenable to the Company's courts, and, in fine, though they intermix with Europeans, they are a class of men totally distinct from them in points of immunity or privilege. I shall here examine how far this seclusion from employments is politic, and give you my opinion upon the subject without reserve.

In India, an extensive country and numerous population are subject to the British power, who have been reduced by superior discipline, and a

steady aggrandizing policy, rather than by any effort of physical force. Those very men, the very soldiers who have acquired our empire, are principally composed of Indians, whose arms have been turned, by our superior conduct, against their own country. Tracing our empire to its source, we shall find its commencement and duration hitherto depend upon springs so delicate, as to be deranged by the slightest disorder. Beside the instability of all military governments, which are liable to be overturned by the power that sustains them, as the Roman Empire was agitated by its Prætorian guards, there are other seeds of destruction which may ripen to our injury, and which we ought to counteract. To examine these; that awe and reverence which our superiority at first inspired among the natives of India must gradually vanish, and are now, in fact, fast disappearing, as time renders them familiar with us and our usages. What at first struck them with wonder or fear is now obvious and common; they are becoming acquainted with the rules and principles by which we have risen, and the spell dissolves which bound them so forcibly; Europeans are increasing among them, they examine closely, observe their actions, and from fearing, begin to despise them. Their manners, religion, and modes of thinking, differ essen-

tially in almost every point from ours, and this difference, no doubt, inspires them with ideas favourable to themselves, and prejudicial to us; in some points it inspires them with abhorrence; for instance, we are unclean in the eyes of a Hindoo, so that if we enter his house he will break all his cooking vessels, or if we touch his body, he will wash himself afterwards; our use of beef offends his prejudices in the highest degree; so that, by his creed, we are wretches doomed to destruction. Our conviviality and manner of living are disgusting to men whose diet is regulated by the strictest abstinence, and are looked on by them as criminal indulgences; our women have their liberty; what more disgraceful than this in the eyes of a Hindoo? In almost every point we differ from them; in almost every one we offend them; but our Seapoy army is composed of these men, whose minds are filled with numberless prejudices against us, which are restrained and kept in check by discipline alone; like a powder magazine, by means of which a city is defended, but if accidentally fired, the bastions, ramparts, and all are blown in air; our Seapoy army which at present defends us, contains within it elements of destruction, that should be carefully preserved from explosion. If they become disaffected, where can we have recourse? the

European troops are comparatively few, and unable essentially to counteract them. A body composed of the discordant materials I have described, may be driven into mutiny by circumstances of the most trivial nature; some slight alteration of dress, an innovation respecting their food may do it; in fact, they mutinied at Vellore and at Java, owing to innovations, of themselves insignificant, but offensive on the score of prejudice, and threatened evil, not only from the injury they effected, but by the contamination of example. Those who have read the History of India, must be aware of the corrupt and disloyal spirit which pervaded its troops at all times, and under all their princes, where impregnable fortresses have been delivered up, and leaders deserted by their armies, at the suggestion of interest, or owing to the prevalence of intrigue: now, though these vices have been corrected by us, they have not been eradicated. We had a noted instance of this during the last war, when the Mahratta chief, Appah Sahib, corrupted the sentry and guard that were placed over him, and was permitted to escape. We had another lately, when a troop of horse, for some reason or other discontented, deserted their officers in a charge, and left them to be massacred by the enemy. What has occurred already may occur again; and, in

the course of time, circumstances may happen, when the Seapoys must be overawed, in order to secure their fidelity, when they must be intimidated to prevent them from mutiny. Can we expect the long duration of an empire which depends entirely on the obedience of men like these, whose prejudices are against us—who are addicted to corruption—who are maintaining the authority of strangers over their own country? No; although it be firm to-day, to-morrow may see this towering, visionary fabric humbled to the earth; it is too frail to withstand the mouldering fingers of time; we must look out for other props in order to secure its permanence, and these present themselves in the Anglo-Indians.

This class of people, although Indians by half blood, always adopt the European dress and customs, as more honorable than those of their maternal stock, among whom, in fact, they enjoy no rank, and are considered outcasts. Many of them are sent to Europe for education, nearly all speak English, and all pride themselves upon their English extraction. They are constitutionally amorous, sedate, and somewhat addicted to indolence; but averse to intemperance and spirituous liquors. They have showy but not solid parts; are good-natured and ostentatious. England, instead of treating these men as stepsons, and re-

garding with a jealous eye their increasing numbers, should adopt them for sons, and make them her friends. She should lay civil appointments open to such as have interest to procure them (which would be a very small number indeed), she should permit such of them as have interest to hold commissions in the army, she should form battalions, to consist solely of Indo-Britons, and be commanded by European officers. In short, she should form a corps of these men, which in concert with the European troops would act as a counterpoise to, and check upon the Seapoys. Our Indian army would then constitute an equilibrium, in which the different members balance each other, tending to render the whole steadier, more consistent, and more efficient. What I advance here is not the wild proposal of a theorist; but in strict conformity with that maxim which is always used, and often abused, to govern dependent states—*Divide et Impera.*

If we make use of one class only of our Indian subjects, for the purposes of offence and defence, that one will naturally rise in proportion to the confidence placed in it, whilst those excluded will sink in the balance; and that favoured class may, in the course of time, take advantage of their superiority to abuse the trust reposed in them. If we extend our confidence to all, by judicious

management, we may establish a corps of different habits, inclinations, pursuits, each filled with jealousy of the other, ready one to oppose the other, in any case of disaffection or danger. The difference of birth, religion, costume, any, the most trivial distinction is sufficient to excite division among large bodies of men, whose minds are governed by the *esprit du corps*, as clocks are moved by a pendulum, and whose actions are more mechanical than those of individuals. To instance this, our European troops in India look with an eye of envy, almost of hatred upon the Seapoys, whom they consider vastly inferior to themselves, on account of the difference in complexion, religion, &c., but who as soldiers in the service of government are their equals in rank. They, on the other hand, look on the European soldiers with contempt, in consequence of their irregularities, excesses in drinking, and wild propensities. The one is regular, parsimonious, sober; the other disorderly, extravagant, debauched, so that between persons so different in country, mind and manners, jealousies must naturally exist. Now the Indo-Britons form a medium, neither addicted to the irregularities of one, nor professing the religion of the other; and, acting as a centre between two extremes, would preserve an equipoise, both harmonious and con-

sistent. If the Seapoys required over-awing, these would join with the Europeans; if the Europeans, they would join with the Seapoys. Were this measure adopted, and battalions consisting of Indo-Britons enlisted, many young men, who are begging in the streets of Calcutta, or starving, would be rescued from poverty and rendered serviceable to their country, instead of pining in misery and degradation. Many who have been left by their fathers, with an insensibility that cannot be sufficiently reprobated, destitute on the world, who have not a decent or honest means of subsistence, would embrace, with joy, a situation which gave them daily bread, and bless the hand that bestowed it. Many young men of this class act as writers in the government offices; others obtain employment in merchants' offices. Some have got property, and are merchants or tradesmen; so that among the diversified population of Calcutta, you meet with them in great numbers, sometimes in respectable, but generally in low situations.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XII.

There are in Calcutta many descendants of the Portuguese, who differ from Indians only in dress, as their complexions are equally dark, and do not display a trace of their European descent. Some of these retain the names, and are derived, or reputed to be derived from noble Portuguese, who have been viceroys or governors in India. A few of them are very wealthy, of whom Baretto is the first, who is considered the richest agent in Calcutta. Without doing them any injustice, I may assert the generality of these Portuguese are very poor and very insignificant. They write in offices for paltry salaries, and follow various petty trades or employments, by which they earn a livelihood. You will see one of these poor fellows dressed out with the most finikin finery, and assuming the airs of a coxcomb, who has only two suits of clothes, a miserable hut to live in, and a dinner of some curry and rice, which he eats with his fingers. These Portuguese are very quiet, inoffensive people; in consequence of their poverty, they generally live among native Indians, by whom they are treated with contempt, on account of the difference in their customs. Among the Hindoo inhabitants of Calcutta, are many

men of immense wealth, called baboos, or gentlemen; these persons are mostly merchants, and some of them carry on mercantile transactions to a great extent. At the Company's sales of salt and opium, they speculate largely, and either lose or gain very great sums. Two years ago, one native merchant purchased all the Company's salt, and afterwards turned defaulter; in consequence of which he was obliged to pay thirteen lacs of rupees as a forfeiture. You may form an idea of these men's wealth, who can speculate to such an amount, and bear up against such losses; their transactions in the interior are very extensive, and they possess numerous commercial connexions among the various provinces of India; they are, in fact, the native agents of Calcutta; great part of the extensive traffic, carried on by native merchants, passes through their hands; their dealings are upon the largest scale; and wealth, in most instances, far surpasses that of European agents; some of them have laid aside the winding, intricate, disagreeable abodes peculiar to their country, and live in elegant mansions, where, at certain Hindoo ceremonies, they receive Englishmen who come to see their diversions. Formerly they were very liberal, in lending Europeans money who assumed a dashing appearance, and something in the shape of an equipage;

however, they have found this a very false criterion in judging of people's respectability, and will not lend money now without a good security, or without a prospect of advantage by doing so. The sircars, or native writers, from their frequent intercourse and connexion with Europeans, deserve to be particularly noticed; these men speak bad English, write accounts in English, and are employed as servants by Europeans, at a trifling salary; they are all acquainted with common business transactions; make purchases by their master's order; attend the bazar, and are drudges to commercial men in Calcutta; they are shrewd, loquacious, and addicted to imposition, requiring to be well watched by their master, toward whom they are submissive and respectful. To strangers newly arrived from England, officers of free traders and the like, who are unacquainted with the customs of India, their manners are extremely impertinent and annoying, and their dealings full of imposition. These persons they approach with an air of superiority and confidence, give such information as is beneficial to themselves, and dictate their proceedings in a style of presumptuous levity; which causes them to laugh, whilst it makes dupes of them. Some among them are truly respectable men, possessing a gravity and decorum of manners, that would do honour to any

station; but a far greater number are the reverse of this; insolent without courage, servants without fidelity, merchants without honesty; accustomed to see the debaucheries and follies of English sailors, they acquire a contempt for the European character, which must be over-ruled by the high tone of authority, in order to curb their forwardness.

Armenian Christians form another body of inhabitants, who are generally very wealthy and respectable people. Their complexion is a copper colour, somewhat lighter than that of the Hindoos; their features are keen, sharp, and penetrating, possessing a hardihood of expression, totally different from the languid softness of a Hindoo face. Their costume consists of a high, round velvet cap, without a peak; coat and pantaloons, with a small frock in front, like that our bishops wear. They have establishments, and chapels of worship in Calcutta. The Parsees form another class of inhabitants, who are descended from the ancient Guebres, or fire-worshippers, driven out of Persia or forced to apostatize by its Mahomedan conquerors. These men follow the religion of their forefathers, and by an undeviating adherence to the doctrines of Zoroaster, after they had been proscribed and rendered penal in their native country, by endur-

ing a voluntary banishment, rather than renounce their faith, afford us an instructive lesson. The bigot and zealot behold in this a proof of that vivacious energy which attaches to national creeds, and which is not to be subdued by the slaughtering sword, or reasoning mufti. The empires of Cyrus and Xerxes, of Arsaces and Chosroes; their pride, their splendour, their victories, have vanished from the page of existence; their trace is only to be discovered among legends of the past. Dwellers in tents, the rude sons of the desert, have seized upon their throne; those venerable magi, who bowed their heads before the eternal fire, have perished—have fled; the priests of Mahomet have defiled their sanctuary and extinguished their fires; but still their religion lives, and still they worship the source of light, in countries where the sword of Mahomet, and brand of persecution cannot reach them. The name of Zoroaster is respected after the downfal of kings and empires. These Parsees resemble the Jews in adherence to their national faith, and like them, too, are a dispersed people; they are to be met with in various parts of Asia, but particularly in India, the aborigines of which never knew, and never practised persecution. Here they are flourishing, contented, and happy. Chinese, Arabs, Malays, Negroes, Persians, Ameri-

cans, people from every part of the globe are here to be met, who have got establishments, or have come for the purposes of commerce. Calcutta, now the capital of India, is a grand emporium for the human race, in which every tint of complexion may be met with, from lily white to jet black. Here the inhabitant of the Frozen Zone converses with him born under the Equator. One born in the southern hemisphere with him of the northern; the sons of the east with those of the west; the white with the black; copper-coloured with the brown; florid with the livid; all intermix amicably to settle the concerns of their common interest, forgetting disinctions of colour, birth, religion, which only affect the ignorant and useless. In this point of view commerce appears a noble profession, like Minerva, extending the olive branch of peace to mankind; subduing their prejudices and passions, binding them together in a chain of harmonious concord. Her head touches the heavens; her foot treads upon the ocean; her wings are upborne by the winds; her hand is a reservoir of plenty and luxury, which she scatters bountifully over the earth. The sciences are in her train, the arts wait upon her steps, and civilization follows her path. Wars of rancour and folly are stopt at her nod; she bids mankind live together like brethren. The wealth of India, the wealth of Asia

is poured into Calcutta. China, Thibet, Nepaul, Cashmere Zahore, Persia, Arabia, send their various articles of growth or manufacture into this great market, which abounds with the produce of east and west, which is a receptacle for the choicest productions of art, and diversified offsprings of nature.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XIII.

The sailors made use of in the country traders are called Lascars, and are expert enough in their profession, although not equal to English sailors. What are termed country traders here, are India ships, that sail to the different ports of that country, China, Persia, &c. &c. but do not make voyages to Europe.

The commanders and officers of these ships are Englishmen, many of whom have lately relinquished their profession, in consequence of its low state at present, and become assistants to indigo planters, or joined in different branches of business. The Lascars do very well under their command, but in dangerous or critical circumstances are apt to lose heart and get intimidated.

Servants in India form a very expensive branch of peoples' establishments, and among persons of rank are so numerous as to be mere puppets for show, rather than objects of real utility. These persons are distinguished by various names, and very punctilious about the duty that each has to perform; so that, although they work very little indeed, one will not perform the least job that ought to be performed by another. You have got half a dozen men, called consumahs and kismutgars, whose business it is to attend at table; a hooka-burdar, who is kept for filling the hooka and will do nothing else; bearers to carry a chatta, or clean the furniture; mussalgis, dobis, baubergis, in short a train of domestics, fit for little but diminishing their masters income. To these gentlemen the following innuendo might be justly applied. Master. "What is John about, Peter?" Servant. "He's doing nothing, sir."—Master. "And what's Tom about?" Servant. "Helping John, sir."—So the servants of India are addicted to do nothing, and to help each other in doing nothing. Many a person of moderate income has got a dozen of these men consuming him, and is either too proud to shake them off, or too fond of show to do without them. With men of fortune who can afford to keep up a retinue, it is a matte

of no consequence, and serves to flatter their vanity; however, when the custom is extended to poor men, it then becomes a nuisance. Why not turn them off? Because they will not—because they cannot; great men in all countries must support idlers; and Europeans in India were all great formerly, but now, though hundreds of them are poor, this ridiculous state and attendance are still affected. A man in India who has got an income of two or three hundred rupees a month, will pay out of this seventy rupees a month for servants' wages, and has got as many attendants as a gentleman of ten times his income in England. After all, too, he is badly served; there is no alacrity, no method among his domestics; and each seems to compute the quantum of his exertions, fearful of doing more than his neighbours. They do nothing spontaneously; they think of nothing that might be conducive to their master's comfort, but require a particular order for every thing. In consequence of these circumstances, they live frequently in hot water with their masters and mistresses, so that changes are very common in this branch of a man's establishment. Here to-day and gone to-morrow, is a motto which will explain the permanency of their situations. Europeans frequently take advantage of their superiority to inflict corporal chastisement

on a servant who offends; so that from this and the constant changes that occur, there is not a shadow of attachment between them. I speak here only of Calcutta; for in the interior, where service is scarce, many domestics live long with, and are warmly attached to their master. But in Calcutta complaints resound on all sides; they are dishonest, drunken, stupid, &c.; on this score great dissatisfaction prevails. The fact stands thus; people expect too much from their servants, and do not make sufficient allowance for national character; also, from the instability of service, these latter grow careless as to whether they please or displease a master. In Calcutta, too, this class of men acquire habits of drunkenness and indecency, foreign to the Indian character, so that from these several causes the Calcutta servants are very careless and very useless.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XIV.

Having given you in my last letters some account of the various orders of men who reside in Calcutta; without, however, pretending to enumerate the whole, or enter into every particular, I shall now turn your attention to the ladies, and give a sketch of them *en passant*. India is a mart for every thing, and has long been a receptacle for such ladies as could not find husbands at home, or whose connexions in that country are respectable. European ladies were formerly in high repute, and from the fact of being born in Europe, unconnected with accomplishments, or other fascinating qualities, were sure to get husbands of some rank; men who longed after domestic happiness, would not, of course, wish to see the children a mixed breed, destined to inherit their property, and carry their name to posterity. The number of European women too was small, so that, like every other scarce article, they became highly valuable. At this time men of the first rank in India often married women who had moved in a very humble sphere at home. However, the case is somewhat altered: European ladies have become numerous; people are not so ready to tie the matrimonial knot, on account of their

Anglo descent, and many of them, at present in Calcutta, have got a very indifferent train of lovers. This change in people's inclinations may be ascribed to various causes; the most prominent among which, is this: of the numbers who came out, all could not be immaculate either in virtue or temper, and from the matrimonial unhappiness which would naturally ensue, the value of such connexions became depreciated. Persons who saw an unpleasant result, in some instances grew timid from the fear of incurring a similar evil, and preferred being contented bachelors to the risk of becoming miserable husbands. Whilst I mention these circumstances, it is far from my intention to insinuate that such marriages were generally unhappy; on the contrary, I assert, there are as good wives to be met with in India, as in any other part of the world. When a young lady comes to her friends in India, if they be persons of rank, the first idea instilled into her mind is to value herself upon the purity of her blood; and though she should have little else to recommend her, she is taught to consider this a point of primary importance. Hence they acquire a degree of contempt for such persons as have got the least mixture of Indian in them; so that very little intercourse subsists between these two classes. A distinction, an interval, is placed between them,

which tends to raise the one and degrade the other; which is only productive of animosity, and subverts the harmony of society. The idea of a degraded class is detestable among persons whose language and manners are similar, against whom no exception but that of birth can be advanced. Amongst these ladies, who have left home in order to better their condition, romantic attachments or romancing of any kind is not to be expected. To shine at a public ball, to be gazed at in the theatre, to be toasted by young fellows, are very agreeable and flattering to every woman's vanity: but these are not the principal points; a matrimonial settlement is the grand desideratum. Amongst the lovers, by whom a favourite belle is surrounded, shape, figure, the graces, are not so much considered, as those more solid words, rank, employments, prospects. It would be amusing to hear an old aunt, experienced in Indian matrimony, deciding the pretensions of different admirers in these particulars, balancing which weighs heaviest, and directing her niece's choice. To one of these ladies a resident would be a prize—a secretary, a head servant in the custom-house, or, perhaps, a magistrate, but subalterns, whether civil or military, have no chance; they must grow older and greater first. But why should we laugh at Indian marriages?—

Is not the same thing common in England?—Does not interest lead Hymen more than love?—These cases are frequent in all countries, though, perhaps, owing to peculiar and topical causes, more general in India than elsewhere. Civilians, officers of rank, or agents, generally marry these ladies, as they are above the sphere of tradespeople, unless their friends be of low rank, in which case they must moderate their ambition; however, Europeans, though lowly connected, sometimes make good marrirges. Many among them are amiable, many accomplished, some ——. But let us draw a veil here, and cover rather than discover female deformity. Scandal, which whispers little love intrigues, whether real or fictitious, is not unknown in Calcutta; and sometimes this malicious tatler prates of certain infidelities or amours which occur in Calcutta, as well as in other places. Mrs. ———— is reported as the *chere amie* of Mr., the honourable or Major ————; people talk about and laugh at it without knowing whether it's true or false, although they generally make a point to believe it. Such things in Calcutta seldom reach a court of justice through the forbearance or short-sightedness of husbands, and serve only as chat for the idle or ill-natured; indeed the nature of marriages, and the disagrèmens of a five month's voyage, if not pre-

disposing causes to them, are not preventatives; but I tread on delicate ground and must desist.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XV.

As the country-born, or to give a name which they like better, the Indo-British ladies, are a class distinct from Europeans, I reserve them for a separate letter. Some of these, whose parents are able to afford it, are sent to Europe for education, imbibe European habits and ideas, and become accomplished women. A few of them are married to men of rank; others reputably, and move in their various spheres with a degree of decorum, which proves that a trifling difference of complexion cannot detract from that genuine worth which only requires proper cultivation in order to shine; but far the greater number are educated at schools in Calcutta, whom I shall take the liberty to describe and to animadvert upon. These young ladies, who, when children, reside with native mothers, and can only speak Hindostanee or Bengalee, are sent to boarding-schools after a certain age, where they learn to speak English, if that can

be called English which is interlarded with Indian phrases. With all deference to these ladies, whilst I make the remark, in consequence of this early use of native dialects, their language afterwards is of a mongrel kind, half Indian, half English. I do not mean by this any sarcasm, far be it from me, but state the fact as a natural consequence of that manner in which they are brought up. At school they are taught to read and write; also those polite accomplishments which are thought necessary to young women. Dancing, perhaps it will surprise you, when I mention the word in such a country as India, is cultivated and practised more than any other accomplishment; these schools differ totally from schools in England, where young girls go to receive education, and afterwards return to their parents: for here young ladies marry out of school, and remain at it often until that happy event takes place, or till time has inscribed them old maids. Such institutions are necessary, and afford an agreeable asylum to this class of ladies, when circumstances permit them no other. Their fathers have died or gone to England, so that they are left without a protector, or, perhaps, have married, and keep these illegitimate children distinct from their family, in which cases a school becomes their abode and their home. Blessed spirit of humanity!—that provides

a home for the fatherless and destitute, thy institutions are sacred, and respectable even amidst their errors. Owing to the circumstances which I now mention, these schools hold forth inducements for young fellows in respectable circumstances to visit and get acquainted with the ladies. Balls are given every week or fortnight, during the cold season, which young officers in the army, mates of ships, and tradesmen frequent. At these assemblies the god of love sometimes makes his appearance, and shoots his dart from the languishing black eye, or delicate waist of an Indian brunette; or perches on a fine turned ancle that trips lightly through the dance, and bends his bow beneath the gauze by which its hidden beauties are surrounded. In this place young men often select their future partners. Amongst these ladies, the desire of marriage is a warm and prevailing passion, which, setting aside physical reasons, commonly pretty strong in a hot country, must naturally arise from their friendless situation. A young miss, who has not reached her teens, and in England would be crying for gingerbread nuts, cocks her little head with womanly consequence, and talks of a husband, gives her opinion of the different gentlemen who danced with her, and rejects or approves with great authority. Such women-children, I believe, are not to be met in England, and are indigenous

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to warm climates, where they come to maturity sooner, and tie the hymeneal knot earlier than in cold ones. These ladies are all troubled with the marriage fever, in a manner that appears disgusting to European delicacy, and a person who frequents the house where a number of them are resident, is either courted into matrimony, or obliged to retire and give up their acquaintance. Coyness, and reserve and bashfulness, are strangers to her, who seizes at Hymen with unblushing front, and flatters some silly blockhead to become her husband, instead of being wooed by a respectful lover. Beside these schools, there are two institutions of a similar kind, for educating the orphan children of officers and private soldiers. The girls are married out of them, according to their respective ranks. In these schools the instruction is confined entirely to accomplishments, with a very trifling portion of solid learning, superadded to which there is a great deal of indolence and empty pride, peculiar to the country; so that a young woman goes to her husband totally ignorant of domestic duties, and very little disposed to learn them. These ladies, born in India, and educated at schools (truth compels me to say it), are a most indolent race of beings, indeed many carry their lounging propensities to an excess both odious and culpable. One of these slothful dames

thinks it too much trouble to keep the keys of her drawers, and give out linens, plate, or other articles of housewifery; she must have a bearer to perform this disagreeable duty; any thing that rouses her from the couch on which she lolls, is irksome; motion, exertion of any kind is insufferable. She lives, eats, drinks, gets a family, and dresses when she goes abroad; in this you behold the round of her existence. Thus she dozes through life like a mere passive organ, without pulse, without feeling, without heart; fulfilling its common functions, but totally neglecting its duties. In this character it is not my intention to include all the above-mentioned ladies, for there are many among them quite the reverse, but it bears upon the greater part of them. In examining the cause we must attribute a great deal to the warm and enervating climate, which compels them to be under cover during the heat, and prevents exercise out of doors; but this is not all, there is a fault in their education; such a spirit of laziness could never so overpower the mind unless it had been early imbibed. Instead of permitting these girls to sleep and lounge during the day, a wholesome discipline should be kept up; a love and habit of action should be instilled by constant employment, and wise instructions should inculcate an aversion to that lethargy created by the climate. Before

these ladies, educated in the Calcutta schools, become active and useful housewives, a new sy of training must be introduced. Instead of lea to consider dressing, dancing, or twirling a f the grand points to be acquired, they should ercised in domestic duties and employments should not be indulged with a train of kismutgar they should know something of literature. I order to introduce these improvements, clever, re spectable women must be procured for governesses, through whose activity and exertions, these school ladies might be made very different from what they are. I know of no point more important than the education of youth, whether male or female; and have, therefore, enlarged upon this subject, as its faults loudly call for correction. Instead of rearing up a generation of useless puppets, through proper management these school ladies might be made useful, active housewives; and to see them so, must be the sincere desire of any person who has the least regard for their welfare.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XVI.

The places of public resort and amusement in Calcutta, are the course, the ball-room, and the theatre. The course is a fine broad road, which leads out to the suburbs of the city, and on which the fashionables figure in the evening. Here landaus, coaches, chariots, curricles, phætons, &c. press forward in close ranks, full of gentlemen and ladies, well dressed: on every side you behold equipages, horses, ostrich feathers, and dandies. Over this scene of magnificence and show, a thick dust is spread, as if sent by some envious power to embitter its sweets, as if to mortify human vanity, by soiling those elegancies in which it takes pride. Here the Calcutta ladies come to court the gaze of admiration, and display their charms; to court, too, the tepid breezes of a climate, which, alas, soon withers their bloom, and plants the drooping lily where the rose was wont to dwell. Many a lady would think this gaiety and splendor dearly bought at such a sacrifice; perhaps, too, they are. The gentlemen who bestride steeds are well dressed, and ride well; the course, in gaiety and splendor, horses and equipages, beaux and belles, resembles Hyde Park, only wanting the cool breezes of England to make it equally agreeable. Public balls are

given in the Town Hall, and, like the course, attract the most respectable inhabitants. Stewards are appointed beforehand to make what arrangements may be necessary, so that every thing is conducted with great order. Quadrilles and country dances are generally practised; however, waltzing has been lately introduced. Here the prettiest faces and finest waists in India are to be seen; pleasure and gaiety hold their court; the dance flies, and all seem happy. This scene of festivity is peculiarly grateful to the young beauties and young beaux of India, as such public occasions for exhibition are rare, and therefore valuable. The lustre of chandeliers, dress, address, dancing, and music, animate the dullest tempers. Such a scene is pleasant to contemplate, and should be encouraged; where man forgets his labours, difficulties, and cares; bounds from the load that presses on his heart, and enjoys happiness, even for an hour. The public dances are in an elegant style, and attended by the fashionable or accomplished, as persons in humble circumstances seldom make their appearance there.

The stage in Calcutta has not arrived at any great eminence, and the duties of the Chowringee theatre are performed principally by amateur actors, for wealthy as this city is, it cannot afford to keep a regular company; or rather the emolu-

ments are not sufficient to recompense their labours notwithstanding the exorbitant price of admission. This want of support for the theatre, arises from various causes: the terms of admission are too high for persons of confined income to indulge much in theatrical amusements, whilst other modes of diversion abound, and can be enjoyed without expense. The dances at schools, private parties, and convivial pleasures occupy this part of the community, so that the audience is composed of persons whose circumstances put them above thinking of the charge for admittance. They, too, have their routs and assemblies, which prevent a regular attendance at the theatre, were they so disposed. After the performance of a play, a bombastic account appears next day in the India Gazette, which praises the actors and acting in both prose and verse; those who have performed well are nonpareils, and inimitable; those who have done tolerably, are admirable; and badly, excellent. The editor fatigues himself by looking for bewitching poesy to dress their merits in, and serves his reader with a dish of as sweet-tasted flummery as he can possibly desire; flowers and graces, and attractions and dignity, flow like a torrent upon the gaping reader; Garrick or Kemble were never so bepraised; these gentlemen, too, have not a single fault. To give the

real state of the case, among these amateurs, there are two, or, perhaps, three actors of eminence, who perform very well, but the rest—how shall I express the rest? One simpers and looks foolish when he should be grave, another bawls with such energy, that nervous people are stunned by the noise; a third stammers and shuffles in his gait, and has the air of a culprit going to the gallows; a fourth is annihilated by the consciousness of his own incompetency, and curses his folly for going there; so that, from this mixture of good and bad, a tragedy on the Chowringee boards has the effect of a tragi-comedy; whilst some characters are performed well, and affect the auditor, others are mouthed so as to melt him into——fits of laughter. It becomes a kind of tragic farce, in which one eye weeps and the other smiles. Before these amateur actors can be rendered good, or even tolerable, they must be criticised properly; their faults must be exposed, and errors corrected; but amateurs would not submit to this; then, I answer, it's better for them not to act at all, than to act badly. Such as required and provoked the lash, would go; bu others, more competent, might supply their place. I would not be as severe on these gentle actors as upon hired ones, but confine my strictures within delicate bounds, so as to produce a refor-

mation without hurting their feelings; and, according to this system, though Calcutta cannot afford to pay for good actors, she would enjoy good ones gratuitously; officers, young civilians, and tradesmen, constitute the company. I shall, for a moment, digress upon the temper, tone of feeling, and enjoyment, that prevail among Europeans in Calcutta. The climate of India tends to nourish irascibility of temper in those who are naturally inclined that way; so that persons of a fiery, hasty turn, are by no means rare. The attendance and establishment, so different from what they have been accustomed to at home, engender pride; so that proud, precise people are common enough. I don't mean by this a noble pride which scorns submission and humiliation, but a paltry pride that requires—"yes, sir," and "no, sir," to its affirmatives and negatives. These two vices are, I think, fairly chargeable on the good people of Calcutta, who can strike a consumah with impunity amidst the whirl of their mighty rage, or dismiss young fellows from their employment who do not boo low enough. On a close sultry day, after spending a restless night, tormented by mosquetos, a person's blood ferments with heat; his humours are jaundiced or full of disgust, so that the least impropriety, or his own caprices, set him in a flame; this is an effect of

the climate, operating thus upon ardent temperature, and he is to be pitied who labours under it (if pity can be extended to violence). Again, sircars, kismutgars, and the like, are so dependent, that "whom they order to go, goeth, and whom they order to come, cometh." Hence the love of obedience or compliance, becomes a paramount passion with them. I know of no place where hospitality is more prevalent and more munificent than in Calcutta: a man of property has generally a number of guests at his house, sees company frequently, and keeps an excellent table, at which luxuries abound of every kind; the choicest wines of Europe are served up (be their price ever so high), and the most delicious meats which can be procured; every thing that can delight the palate is supplied, on which the nicest epicure might banquet with pleasure, and conviviality is carried to a sociable and proper length, without deviating into bacchanalian riot. Men of rank keep a sumptuous table, those of small income a good one; so that a stranger or a guest are well treated wherever they go. Persons to whom fortune has acted as a churlish stepdame, and left without employment, generally find a friend to receive and entertain them, until more favourable circumstances occur; so that the hospitality of Europeans at Calcutta is, in an eminent degree,

generous and kind. It gives me pleasure to pass this eulogium, unmingled with the smallest taint of censure; indeed, it is one which cannot be often enjoyed by a painter, whose sketches are guided by the fingers of truth. Without indulging in sycophancy on one side, or cynical moroseness on the other; he describes best who looks straight forward to facts, and paints them as they present themselves to his view. He may be deceived, his colourings may be inappropriate, but the outlines are correct; he does not err wilfully. Those who shine amidst the gaities of the course, the ball-room, and the theatre, are not always, are not often happy. To a casual spectator, who is struck by the show and magnificence which every where appears, their lot is an enviable one—to an observer it appears different. Exile from home, to those who have never endured it, may seem a slight punishment; to him who has, it is a heavy one, and that too in a climate so different from home, where a European is a kind of prisoner at large, incapable of exertion, almost of motion. Many whose circumstances are affluent, but will not admit of their leaving India, cherish a longing for England which gnaws within them, like a worm, and disturbs their peace. Others, with whom the climate does not agree, carry pallid faces, and sinking frames, and hollow

spirits, to the places of amusement; what is their enjoyment? Grief garbed in a smile. He who feels a fever burning within his veins, or whose liver is twitched with torture, cannot have much pleasure from sitting in an elegant landau; nay, with those who are best pleased, how stands the case? As long as these things are novel and striking they are agreeable, but when the novelty wears off, after they become common, their pleasure departs. The climate throws a languor over a man's feelings and frame that communicates itself to external objects: so that those things sicken and pall with disgust, which in another country would impart pleasure and happiness. To collect my ideas in a point, there is a great deal of splendour and appearance, but very little enjoyment among the higher classes in Calcutta. I consider the lot of a civil servant, stationed in a healthy province up the country, is far preferable to theirs who reside in that sickly city; the authority he possesses is grateful to an ambitious mind; the society he enjoys is limited, and perhaps agreeable; the climate more moderate and healthy than that of Bengal. The country affording rural amusements and field sports, from tiger hunting to quail shooting, a man so situated may, in my opinion, be very happy. A magistrate, possessed of a respectable office, dispensing

justice to those around him, and living in an agreeable country, is, I consider, a happier man than the greatest or wealthiest in Calcutta. One should not find fault with things because they are different from what he has been accustomed to; a man of sense should discard little local prejudices, and adapt his manners to the customs of that country in which he resides; but with every effort and every adaption, Europeans, in Bengal, will find sufficient cause of annoyance and disagreement.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XVII.

I shall conclude my notices of Calcutta by some observations upon religion and the police. The police establishment of Calcutta is greatly complained of, and is very defective, both as regards surveillance and efficient useful regulations. The magistrates are not civilians, possessing permanent appointments, but persons who receive their situations from, and hold them at the pleasure of government, in consequence of which they are, and must be its creatures. Such an order of things may be both necessary and proper in England,

where the members of administration can be supposed to have very little intercourse with a police magistrate, in whose conduct any impropriety would be speedily exposed and punished; but in India it is totally different, there the members of government have got connexions amongst merchants and other respectable inhabitants, so that their direct influence may screen these latter indirectly. Again, the society of Calcutta is so confined, speaking comparatively with other large towns, that the police magistrates are personally acquainted with the most respectable inhabitants, and will undoubtedly favour their friends when accused by a stranger; nay, they do it, they do it in the most shameful manner, of which I shall relate an instance that occurred some time ago, and was noticed in the Journal:—two gentlemen were taking their evening drive in a gig, when a coach came forward from a gateway with great rapidity. The coachman drove toward them without slackening his pace, or attending to their perilous situation, upset and broke their gig, from which they were thrown and received personal injury. Upon enquiry, they discovered whose servant the driver was, and summoned him before a magistrate; the man came, produced a letter from his master, a military officer of rank; upon perusing which, this worthy magistrate dismissed

the parties, and told them he could give them no redress! From this anecdote, you will have an idea of these gentlemen's characters, who are dependent men, both from their situation and circumstances liable to influence; so that very little good can be expected, and very little is derived from them. The persons employed as watchmen, are called chokedars, and the watch-house a chokey.

Disputes frequently occur between them and sailors, in consequence of their mutual ignorance respecting each other's language, and the latter are often extremely ill-used by them; for it is a common practice among them to beat prisoners of this description, whether provoked by opposition or not. These persons, however, are protected by their superior, the magistrate, from whom it would be vain to look for redress, as he will protect his understrappers whether right or wrong. In Calcutta the police regulations common to great towns are unknown. There is no registry of vehicles or conveyances for public accommodation, such as hackries, palanquins, boats upon the river, &c. which should be all under proper regulations. Police interference is confined almost solely to keeping the peace, and the removal of nuisances; in other respects it is not known. That system which should prevail in every metropolis,

and which is so rigidly adhered to in London, remains still to be introduced. A registry should be made out of public accommodations, numbers affixed to them, and reasonable charges established. Police orders and institutions should be felt by all ranks of men, within the city, to be really useful; and police magistrates should be independent men, holding permanent situations resumable only on account of misconduct in office. Men are naturally enough inclined to be subservient to superiors, without being weighed down by the additional burthen of absolute dependence. Make them independent if you would have them to administer justice. Let the Calcutta magistrates be so; form suitable police regulations, and those causes of complaint which prevail at present will be removed. Let corrupt favouritism, or corrupt practices of any kind be severely punished; so that, as by a wholesome regimen, these gentlemen may be restored to a sound tone of feeling, and a reform will follow immediately. Religion in Calcutta, is as various in the manner and objects of devotion as the people who inhabit it. There, all worship God after their own heart, and after the forms of their ancestors, without dreaming of that odious persecution which was once so sanguinary, and still prevails among Christian nations. For my own part I cannot

conceive a greater satire upon our holy religion than for its servants to come forward with a Bible in one hand and an axe in the other, to proclaim the religion of peace and commit murder in a breath; to preach charity and forgiveness of injuries in the pulpit, to light the faggot, and enact penal statutes out of it. Statutes which are disgraceful to a civilized nation and Christian people, which convert their boastings of liberality and justice into the ravings of absurdity and folly. Calcutta is an episcopal see, its first bishop, Dr. Middleton, died lately, from a stroke of the sun, which he got by crossing the Hoogly, on a very sultry morning, to examine the new college erecting near the Company's garden. He possessed talents, and the pride of talents, and was unpopular among the inhabitants of Calcutta, because he kept them at a proper distance, because he would not humble his mitre before their mercantile haughtiness. A short time afterwards the archdeacon was carried off by the cholera morbus.

The cathedral is a handsome building. There is a Scotch kirk, which is also a handsome building. Beside these there are a number of missionary chapels, and a strong corps of this class of clerical gentlemen to be met with, both here and at Serampore. In Bengal, and, curious to relate, in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta, the cul-

pable points of Hindoo superstition are carried to greater excess than in any other part of India. It is here that those miserable persons who are languishing under severe sickness, are hurried down to the Ganges, from which they must not return alive, but are suffocated by their friends with mud and water. It is here that the widow sacrifices herself upon the burning pile of her deceased husband, and by this self-devotion affords us an example that superstitution is often stronger than the love of life or fear of death. This practice is confined principally to certain families of high caste, who consider the adherence to it as a point of honour, which confers lustre on their name, and is carefully inculcated in their daughter's minds, so that it is not the result of a momentary impulse, but of a long resolved determination, and, therefore, the victims do not conduct themselves like mad enthusiasts, but collected martyrs. No drugs are administered, no intoxicating spices to inspire her with false courage; but with calm and collected fortitude, this child of error and victim of family pride, embraces her husband's corpse, and clasps the faggot of death. Music drowns her cries, bamboos are thrown across to prevent her convulsive struggles, or escape; and her form is quickly changed to a heap of ashes. At

a distance from Calcutta it is not practised, even in the upper parts of Bengal it is not; however, our government has so far interfered with it as to oblige persons, on an occasion of this kind, to obtain permission from a magistrate. At Kalee Ghaut is a famous temple where the Hindoos worship, and practise different modes of self-torture, such as boring the tongue and sides, aud passing spears, bamboos, or other things through the wound—this is as bad as the monkish flagellation. The principal religious ceremony is that of the doorga pooga: upon this occasion respectable people make a structure of wood, paper, &c. ornamented and gilt, as an offering resembling a pagoda or tower, which they carry in procession, amidst the noise of drums, trumpets, hautboys, and throw into the river as a conclusion of the scene. Ignorant fellows, and poor fellows who get paid for it, suspend themselves by hooks, stuck into the back, and whirl round at a height of thirty feet from the ground. At night the baboos receive Europeans, who visit them from curiosity. These gentlemen indulge with dancing girls, music, and perfumes; the temples are filled with worshippers, who express their devotion by shouting, uproar, and beating their breasts. These penances of Hindooism are more prevalent about Calcutta than any part of the interior that

I am acquainted with; so that a stranger who stops there, for a short time, will see and hear of more absurdity than is to be met with in most other places.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

DEAR Z.

An excursion up the country (as it is termed) into the interior of India, after being pent amidst the smoke and dust of Calcutta, is an agreeable recreation; doubly agreeable to breathe the air of a delightful country, and see the rustic occupations of its inhabitants. During the cold season, when a person can exercise without danger, to proceed thus through a land flowing with milk and honey, according to the phraseology of the prophets; to observe its tranquil scenery, its varied crops; some new warmed with animation, sprouting from the earth; others rising towards maturity, and covering it with a robe of verdure; a third arrived at full growth, stooping beneath the hand of hoary age, bending under the ears of plenty, that offer an abundant harvest to their happy sower, imparts to the mind of a traveller

sensations of pure and generous delight. His fancy reviews the thousands who are to derive nourishment from those friendly germs; his heart rejoices in their plenty. Here all the stages of existence are seen together; infancy, youth, and age, are pourtrayed in the different degrees of growth, fertility, and production roll in a circle, whose links are closely united, that bear constant nourishment to the strength and life of man.

There are two ways of travelling into the interior of India, viz. over-land in a palanquin, which is denominated going by dawk, and is expeditious; also by water, in sailing up the Ganges, and other navigable rivers; this latter mode is very tedious, and affords a good opportunity for seeing the country, as the boatmen track along the river side, unless the wind be favourable and enable them to sail. Persons going up the river, hire a budgerow for their personal accommodation, which is a large, clumsy boat, with commodious apartments for sleeping and sitting; also boats of an inferior kind, for cooking and luggage. After leaving Calcutta you come to Barrackpore, where the governor-general has a seat, park, and menagerie. The magnificent Wellesley intended to erect a palace here, but his intentions were frustrated by the Company's avarice; nevertheless, it is a charming place, and attracts the idle

or curious to visit it. On the opposite side of the Hoogly is Serampore, a Danish settlement, which is a very pretty town, having a small garrison and a governor. This place being out of the English pale and law, affords an asylum to persons who have got embarrassed in Calcutta, and wish to escape from the power of creditors, or annoyance of imprisonment. When a tradesman, whose circumstances are on the decline, goes to Serampore, he is considered to have made a retreat, as criminals were wont, who seized on the horns of the altar for protection. Beside Serampore, there are Bandel, formerly a Portuguese; Chinsura, a Dutch; and Chandernaghur, a French settlement, which has also its governor and little garrison. These two places, now under foreign dominion, are like specks on the surface of the British power, and would surrender to a company of our Seapoys; they serve rather to perpetuate the name of a power which has existed, than to bestow any present importance, and stand as mementos of a name engrossed and swallowed up by ours. Beside these places, which are all handsome, well-built towns, and smile above the Hoogly, in the showy garb and dignity of architectural elegance, the banks of the river up to Chandernaghur, are lined with beautiful buildings; villas surrounded by groups of trees and

blooming parterres, and native villages clustered on the line of route, like the populous suburb of a great metropolis in Europe; these structures seem to issue from the city, as rays from a centre, and gradually disappear until we arrive at their extreme boundary, and are left to muse upon the busy, the gay, the checkered scene we have past. The traveller walks in an evening along fields of a light sandy soil, but which produce abundant crops, or saunters amidst mango groves covered with constant foliage; sometimes he enters the native villages, examines the people, their appearance and avocations, and begins to feel the isolation of an individual who differs from every person around him. His eye wanders over their little bazaar, examines the various articles of their domestic consumption, and the faces of the inhabitants. In the morning, the groves, breathing a balmy odour, echo with the chirping of birds, the cooing of doves, and lowing of cattle that graze beneath; the fields, with workmen who are ploughing, sowing, or engaged in other pursuits of agriculture: life and light glow on every side; and the gazer's heart expands with joy, whilst he beholds the humble, the contented, and the peaceful scene. The majestic pepel, the tapering bamboo, the eccentric banian, whose branches turn down, take root in

the earth and thus multiply, and the tamarind tree are scattered around. The cocoa and palm supply a delicious and refreshing drink; barley, raher, merooa, castormet, curti, tobacco, flax, sugar-cane, and India corn, are spread over the fields, and present a great variety of production. The land, its crops, and the man who cultivates it, are so different from those of Europe in appearance, that a spectator's eyes are opened, his views are expanded by the prospect, his vision, no longer rivetted upon one spot, beholds the world, and sees numberless modifications of animals and objects, varying according to situation, soil, and temperature, yet all proceeding from and pointing to a common centre; place is annihilated, country generalized in the view, he becomes a citizen of the world. Hoogly, the village from which that river takes its name, is situated some distance above Chandernaghur, and was formerly the seat of a Dutch factory, and extensive commercial transactions. Burdwan is a town of considerable magnitude; and Plassey, a small village, where Clive defeated the Subah Suraja Dowla, which laid the foundation of our power over Bengal; in this contest, the same individual ambition and unprincipled treachery prevailed, which had reduced the Mogul dynasty from a mighty and flourishing empire, to a despised and powerless

phantom, which dissipated its armies; and tore from the imperial throne its splendor and trophies to grace the rebellious chiefs who trampled on their sovereign. The Subahs betrayed the emperor, their generals betrayed them; and thus, from rank to rank, treason stalked along, attracting all orders in her vortex, submersing the voice of country beneath a selfish wish for individual aggrandizement, till ruin came rushing in, amidst their distractions, and a foreign power, seized upon the spoil which a thousand rapacious hands grasped at in vain. Mihir Jaffier, Suraja Dowla's general entered into a treaty of treason with Colonel Clive against his master; they prevailed, and the traitor was rewarded with his master's musnud; but his anticipations were frustrated, and ambition disappointed; his was the shadow, his auxiliaries, the royal tree. Bengal was eventually ceded to the Company. Moorshedabad is the capital of Bengal, and nabob's seat of residence; he lives here in idleness and ease, having a handsome establishment and pension allowed him by the Company; he has no authority, and nothing to think of but amusement or devotion, for the Company manage his temporalities. His palaces are handsome and commodious buildings, but no way remarkable. Moorshedabad is a large and populous city; the edifices most worthy

of attention are mosques, which look pretty with their domes and minarets; but private houses are built of brick without plaster, mud walls, or bamboos and grass, which, together with the narrow streets, appear very insignificant; added to this, there are many stagnant ponds; so that the *toute ensemble* fills a European with contempt for Indian architecture, cleanliness, and taste. The bazaar, however, is wide, and consists of tolerably good houses. This neglect of architecture prevails throughout India; the country and the city, the peasant's hut and noble's castle, are very little different. It is a characteristic defect of their minds, which are devoid of the feelings, and insensible to the beauties we admire; the temperature of their country is such as to render those close, warm habitations unnecessary, so essential to people's comfort in Europe. During the rains, they only require shelter from the wet, for it is not then cold; so that a Hindoo does not labour under any natural necessity to erect fine buildings for his comfort, and does not dream of raising a magnificent pile above his head. Like the Chinese, their ingenuity and skill are displayed in manufactures; their industry in agriculture; but architecture, statuary, painting, and the like, are unknown, or rudely practised by them. After passing up the Hoogly, Bugratty, and a number of

other rivers, you at length enter the Ganges, beside Radgmahil. There are some ruins of this place still remaining, which was formerly large, populous, and the capital of Bengal; but was burnt during the subaship of Suja, the Emperor Shaw Jehan's son. Among these ruins, one more recent than the rest has an elegant marble floor, and appears at no distant period to have been inhabited. A head is crayoned upon the walls, with Cassim Alli Khan written below, and verses are scribbled over them by Europeans, who have gone that way. Even in the best cultivated country, patches of jungle are occasionally seen, which consists of brushwood, interspersed like thickets, among low trees or shrubs. In this, tiger, deer, wild buffalos, and hogs, take up their abode, and form a source of annoyance to people living in the vicinity. The tiger roams from his jungle in search of prey, and conceals himself amidst the sugar-cane, or other crops which are sufficiently high for this purpose; gathered up in a small compass, he beds in a furrow, covered with stems of grass, and remains motionless, until the unwary reaper approaches and comes within his grasp; he springs upon the unhappy man, his teeth are rivetted upon the victim's throat; death from his jaws and iron paw is the work of an instant. The father who but an hour before beheld

his son healthy and strong—the mother who took pride to look upon his form, whose little domestic plans, and arrangements, and endearments, were centred in him—looks from her cottage expecting his return—she sees—and faints upon his mangled body. This is an accident which occurs frequently among persons who live in the vicinity of jungle, and cattle also often fall a prey to this ferocious animal. His action is that of a cat seizing a mouse; he springs on the devoted beast, and with a stroke of the paw on his head fells it to the ground. Notwithstanding the causualties that sometimes happen, the natives drive their cattle, for grazing, to the jungle, which abounds with pasture; and it is said, if a tiger make his appearance, the buffalos form in a circle round their herdsman, presenting a bulwark of horns, which that animal does not dare to penetrate, but retires defeated to his thicket. Wild elephants, wild hogs, and wild buffalos, are all graniverous animals, and soon mow down the peasant's crops within their vicinity, unless well-guarded by the owners. They are not, however, of a sanguinary disposition, seldom injure men, and are easily alarmed. These animals, owing to their strength and fierceness, afford the noblest species of hunting, and the chace may be enjoyed, as practised by the heroes of antiquity; the Caledonian hunt

may be revived; the boar, tiger, and buffalo, are antagonists fit to exercise both skill and courage. Jungle abounds not only in uncultivated wastes, but in the finest and most populous provinces, and always contains a number of these wild inhabitants; population, however, which is at present fast increasing, encroaches upon their domain; the skirts are first brought into use; the boundary is past, and thus man proceeds, gradually encroaching upon the beast, until its whole territory is usurped. The rivers sailed up hitherto, are in most places confined within banks; so that a traveller has every where the view of a fine cultivated country; but when he enters the Ganges it is different: this mighty river rolls its waters in a majestic flood, and demands shores instead of banks. During the rains it overflows all the surrounding country, and appears like an inland sea; at that season a vast sheet of water extends on every side, and compels man to withdraw to a distance, or take shelter upon some rising ground against its fury. Owing to the wide extent of the flood, and the various impetus by which the waters are propelled from the mountains and high lands, the bed of the Ganges, or of its branches, often shifts considerably in low sandy plains, and seeks a different channel from what it occupied before the rains. The rapidity of the current, too,

is always undermining its instable sandy banks, which fall into the flood in large masses, and rouse the hearer at a great distance by the noise of their unceasing warfare. Where the banks and the country are high, villages are scattered over its surface, and its bosom yields plentiful sustenance to their inmates; but, if low, a sand-bed extends around, cultivation and inhabitants disappear, and the traveller is left to muse in silence along the barren waste, or gaze upon the rapid waters as they foam along; perhaps an aligator basking on the sand excites his curiosity, to view its uncouth form and scaly sides; or the kingfisher diverts him, hovering over and darting on its prey. Here he sees the braming duck and paddy bird, sauntering at the water side; there, the crow, pariar dog, and vulture, banquetting. Good heaven! how shocking it is to humanity, how sickening to behold the remains of their feast! a hand or an arm—a leg, or, perhaps, the head are left—whilst the other parts are picked bare to the bone. A skeleton would not affect one so, but the skeleton with a sound member strikes a knell of mortality to one's heart; the process of destruction is going on, a bird of prey is tearing that limb which was once animated with life like yours and mine; the hand that remains entire seems left as a witness, to testify how low the power, and pride,

and strength of man, will be reduced at last. This custom of committing bodies to the river prevails principally about Calcutta and the lower parts of Bengal, where wood is dear, and poor people either cannot, or will not purchase it, to perform the funeral rites of their deceased friends; there it is a great nuisance, and bodies are seen floating down the river entangled about ships, or else thrown ashore by the tide; nothing inspires Englishmen with more horror than a sight like this. Casting the body to dogs and birds of prey, was a prophetic denunciation uttered against their most criminal kings among the Jews, and has, in childhood or manhood, struck terror into our hearts; here we behold the punishment, and our mind, impelled by a nervous excitement of deeply graven impressions, imagines the crimes and enormities which led to it. Higher up the country, and on the banks of small rivers, I have never known it to be practised; there they always consume their dead upon a funeral pile, and scatter their ashes in the river. In Tirhoot, if a man be too poor to purchase wood for this ceremony, any respectable person will give him a tree, or he may cut one with impunity for the necessity of the case, and the reverence due to the dead, shield him alike from question or reproach. As one passes along he meets with boats

in great numbers laden with cargo—boats, did I say? fleets crowd upon fleets in quick succession, bearing the riches and productions of this fertile country to their various places of destination. "Whence have they all come?" a spectator enquires with astonishment as he passes one after another in quick succession. From a land of plenty, from a land that abounds with every thing ornamental or useful, intersected by noble and navigable rivers that bear its riches from parts the most remote, and admit of a ready intercourse among its different inhabitants, cotton, indigo, opium, lackdye, saltpetre, silk, tobacco, rice, various kinds of grain, oil, timber, and other articles too numerous to be mentioned, are carried to Calcutta or the different inland towns. The Ganges, Goggra, Jumna, and Bogratty, with their countless tributary streams, pour wealth upon every wave; in point of utility, they are suitable handmaids to such a country, and almost deserve the adoration they receive from its inhabitants. The boats used for this internal navigation are called panchsowes, and are very clumsy; they are almost flat-bottomed in order to draw less water, as during the dry season many places are scarce navigable; the boatmen, too, should be acquainted with the river, on account of the shoals and currents which are very numerous, and would

cause great difficulty or inconvenience to an inexperienced person. To sit upon one's budgerow in the evening, enjoying the fresh breeze, and viewing a fleet of these little vessels scud before the wind, is pleasant enough; their tattered, ragged sails, and rough unadorned sides, in my mind, make a more various and picturesque appearance than boats would elegantly rigged. These are the productions of art, and convey to the mind an idea of labour; those the rude workmanship of nature, which please even in their defects; the careless chisel that dressed them, and unskilled hand that shaped them out, representing industry consummating her wishes without constraint.

Although jetting springs and purling streams are not met with, every part of the country is well watered; for the interior is intersected by numerous petty rivers and canals, which supply its inhabitants abundantly. Tanks and reservoirs of water abound in every place, and there is scarce a village but has got one, where they are either useful or necessary. They generally cover three acres of ground, but many, which have been excavated, anciently, by Rajahs or other great men, are upwards of a mile in circumference. They are filled during the rains, and this stagnant water is used for bathing or drinking all the year

round. There are also numerous sunk wells in the villages, which are subject to certain regulations, as people of low caste cannot drink out of a well used by those of high caste; and on the other hand, these would not drink from a well used by those. It is considered a meritorious act to make either wells or tanks, and pietists or persons who wish to gain a reputation for charity, often expend large sums in this way. These tanks are surrounded with a mound ten or twenty feet high; they have a good effect in the *coup d'œil* of a level country, and afford a bearing for the eye to rest upon. There are no highways for public accommodation, except a few dawk and military roads made by the Company, and, unless during the rains, these lines of route so necessary in other countries may be dispensed with. During the dry season a horseman scours along the plain without meeting a lett or impediment of any kind, taking care, however, to follow the beaten track: when he comes to a river, if it be fordable, his horse wades across; if not, he will find a boat, in which he goes himself, and carries his saddle, whilst the horse swims alongside. There are no bridges, and the boats used for crossing small rivers are hollowed from the trunk of a palm tree. During the rainy season travelling is not practicable, or attended with extreme difficulty; one's

horse is obliged to wade up to the belly for miles, through rice chowrs; the rivers have overflown their banks, are deep, rapid, and difficult to pass; every cut, in short, is full of water, so that it is altogether a very disagreeable affair. From this want of public accommodations you may easily comprehend, it is a word which has very little influence, and is little understood by the inhabitants of India. There ideas of connexion, or feelings of regard, do not extend beyond their village or immediate vicinity; and for this reason the only works they erect to confer more general benefit, or reach beyond an individual, are tanks, wells, and banks to prevent the water escaping from their rice lands. The words patriotism and public good, which we have derived from the Greeks and Romans, and lay, or pretend to lay so much stress upon, are unknown in their language.

In several parts of the Ganges are seen large stones or ledges of rock, which are piled one above the other, and rise about fifty feet above the river; owing to the infrequency of such a sight in those parts, and their circular, artificial figure, they become phenomena that excite one's curiosity. Some distance above Radgmahil, there is a remarkable one which contains a pagoda, neat, handsome, and, from its situation, romantic. A temple on a rock in the midst of the Ganges—

fleets of boats, villages, a cultivated country, and noble river, all lie around it; where could man find a fitter spot to behold, and to be grateful for the bounties of heaven—where a more secluded one to worship without ostentation?

In passing through this part of India, those hills and vallies which are so frequent in England are not to be seen; the country spreads out in one uniform plain, with scarcely a perceptible eminence, even to the horizon; nature has excluded productions of a hard or rough quality; stones, rocks, or gravel, are not met with, and the earth consists of a fine, light mould, which possesses astonishing vegetative energy, when well moistened. No wonder the inhabitants are of a soft, even temperament; every thing about them is so—the sky above them, the ground they tread upon, their influences are not exerted capriciously, for the seasons are constant amidst their variations, and the earth spread in a level plain. The Bengalee looks around him, every thing he sees has a uniform aspect; the pressure of the atmosphere is equal, the flow of his humours is even, and undisturbed by passion; the current of his life is moderate and mild; sometimes his strength and constitution are overwhelmed by the rage of a fever, as his country is inundated by rains, but when it subsides, health

returns with double force and relish; his body seems benefitted by the late attack, as his soil is enriched by the waters. Amongst the native inhabitants of Calcutta and the low parts of Bengal, sircars, and persons of respectability, are soft featured and good looking, but the lower and working classes are by no means comely; their complexion is sooty, their person ill-turned, and gait shuffling; the women are dirty in their appearance, and worse looking than the men; you will often behold among them that part we call a bosom in England, hanging down in a shrivelled hag-like manner, and very offensive to an eye that regards either beauty or decency. As a traveller advances he will find a great alteration take place both in feature and appearance among the inhabitants. From Radgmahil upward, the natives begin to get fairer, displaying a more manly air, better figure, and finer features than those he has hitherto seen; he comes gradually among men of a lofty port, polite in their address, and easy in their manners. Instead of Bengalee, which, in my opinion, is a disagreeable discordant jargon (as spoken by the common people at least), they here begin to speak Hindostanee, a fine, expressive, colloquial dialect, interspersed with many Persian phrases, smooth in its enunciation, and agreeable to the ear. Having

thus given you some account of what an excursion up the country presents worthy of notice, I shall conclude.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XIX.

The cultivation of indigo gives employment to a great number of Europeans, and indigo factories belonging to, or superintended by them, are dispersed among the most fertile provinces of Lower India. Both upon this account, and owing to the great importance of this article to Indian commerce, I presume it will not be unacceptable to give you a description of indigo planting and planters. Important differences occur as to the mode of conducting this business in various places, so that a general sketch would not be appropriate; I shall, therefore, select a particular place, and describe it as practised there, viz. the district of Tirhoot. In Tirhoot the indigo factories are all of a respectable size; those petty establishments, which are common in Jessore and that part of Bengal, are unknown, as, on an average, each of them has got eighteen pair of vats, and cultivates three thousand biggas of land;

some are of greater magnitude, others less; however, this is about the average calculation. Four or five of these factories, generally speaking, belong to one proprietor, who is either a Calcutta agent, or an indigo planter that has been fortunate in the business, and built or purchased for himself; the concern total is superintended by a person who is allowed a salary and share for his trouble; under him are assistants, each of whom has the charge of a factory, and a salary of one hundred and fifty or two hundred rupees per month. Each factory has got a large establishment of native servants, of whom the principal are called omlahs, who keep an account of the expenditure in Persian, inform their master respecting local matters and customs necessary to be observed, oversee the labourers, and are, in fact, his men of business: they receive from seven to thirty rupees per month. There are two ways in which indigo planters have a right in the soil, viz. by taking the lease of villages from a zemindar in one of these omlah's name, and holding them by this subterfuge (for Europeans are not permitted to do so themselves), or by giving money in advance to a zemindar, and getting an engagement from him to cultivate a stipulated number of biggahs. The first is both more agreeable and more beneficial, for by it the

planter acquires a landlord's power over his tenants; so that his business is carried on without trouble, and he can select good land for his own purposes: at the same time there is a risk of the omlah, claiming real instead of nominal possession, so that he should be under a bond that would prevent this; the latter is often attended with difficulty and inconvenience; for, after a zemindar has received his advances, perhaps he refuses to prepare his lands, importunes the planter for more money, and, in some cases, will not cultivate at all; so that, beside the disappointment, it is necessary to commence a lawsuit against him. In consequence of zemindars refusing to fulfil their engagements, disputes frequently occur between them and the planter, which require some address on the part of the latter, to manage properly, and bring to an amicable conclusion. He has no authority over them, and no means of compulsion except by the law, which is very lenient; whilst they are strong in adherents, and can resist him and his claims with impunity. An indigo planter, to conduct his business properly, should be acquainted with farming, able to speak Hindostanee well, and have a competent knowledge of the laws and customs of India; in order to prevent imposition, to which he would be otherwise liable in his various intercourse with natives;

he should have a good constitution, no prejudices, and great activity, so as to ride sixteen miles in the morning without inconvenience. The cultivation of an indigo factory is of two kinds, viz. zirrot, which is a farm held and laboured by the factory; and zillah, which is that sown by zemindars, or tenants. These zirrots and zillahs do not lie in one place, but are scattered through the country, at a distance of eight or twelve miles. Native servants, called zilledars and hurkarus, are appointed to take charge of them, see the work done properly, and make a report to their master of what is going on, who visits them alternately, and gives the necessary orders. After the manufacture, which ends in October, a planter begins to prepare his lands for the ensuing season; first, by rooting out all the old stalks of indigo with an implement called a kodally, and afterwards ploughing it. As rain does not fall for some months, after the wet season, his principal object is to preserve the moisture his lands have acquired, and prevent it from evaporating. For this purpose he turns it up repeatedly with the plough, which is a light piece of wood, with a single shaft to guide it, and an iron bar for the share. After ploughing, a spar of timber four feet long, and shaped out properly, is drawn over the ground in order to smooth its surface. You

may imagine implements of this kind cannot penetrate very far, for which reason, also, to keep the lands soft and moist, they are ploughed sixteen times or oftener; when prepared, they are finely pulverised and quite smooth, without a weed or blade of grass. Planters begin to sow in the latter end of February, with seed which is partly grown by themselves, and part purchased by merchants; this is a very critical period, for if a fall of rain should take place before the plant has vegetated and appears above ground, its growth is prevented by a thick crust which forms upon the earth: so that a second sowing must be commenced, generally performed upon this occasion by the English drill plough which has been introduced; the first sowing is by broadcast. After the sowing is finished, and seed has had time to vegetate, the zilledars send in a report of such lands as have succeeded, and such as have missed; the amount of this latter is often very considerable, so that another sowing must be entered upon after a fall of rain, when the lands have acquired moisture; perhaps this may fail, too, again and again, for the delicacy of this plant is such, that it requires not only great care in cultivation, but the nicest adjustment of temperature for its production. When the plant rises about six inches high, it is necessary to weed

it, by clearing all grass and vegetable productions from its root; this operation is performed with a small implement called a kurpi, which consists of a small iron blade fixed in a shaft six inches long; the workman holds this in his hand, and delves it lightly into the earth, taking care not to root up the plant; after this is finished, the crop begins to shoot up pretty high, when it gets choaked among the grass which has sprung up again. A second weeding is then commenced, at the end of which the plant assumes the figure of a tree, gets strong, branches out, and rises five feet high. In managing zirrots or factory farms, a great number of hired ploughs and people are employed in the ploughing and weeding seasons; at these times the muster generally amounts to three hundred ploughs and seven hundred men daily: there may be fewer or more occasionally, but this I think a fair medium. At the very idlest season, an indigo factory has got employment for one hundred workmen daily, so that the expenses attending such an establishment would be enormous, were it not for the low rate of manual labour in India. The manufacture commences in July, and the plant, after being cut by a sickle to which it readily yields, though of a ligneous nature, is carried into the factory upon hackries drawn by bullocks, on bullock's backs,

and in boats; three hundred hackries, five hundred bullocks, and four boats are requisite; for these the indigo planter gives advances beforehand, in order to secure their attendance, viz. eighteen rupees for hackries, and two for bullocks; his whole business, in fact, is carried on by advancing money, as without it he can do nothing, and has often much difficulty with it. The natives are naturally averse to indigo cultivation, both on account of the trouble it is attended with, and the trifling profit, which is not a sufficient recompense for their labour; however, they are forced to it by their necessities. A zemindar wants money to pay his revenue to government, and must have it somehow or other; he goes to a planter, gets the sum requisite, gives an engagement, and his tenants are compelled to cultivate: so that this business in Tirhoot is carried on more through the necessities of the people, than regard for itself. The colouring matter is contained in the leaves alone, and the quantum of produce depends upon their size and number, without any relation to the tree itself, which does not possess the precious dye with which they are impregnated. The process of manufacture is as follows:—After the plant is drawn to the factory it is put into vats, which may be rated at eighteen feet by eight in super-

ficies and five feet deep; having been pressed firmly down by bamboos which are placed across the vat-beams, it is watered, and allowed to stand until fermentation takes place; this happens in twelve or sixteen hours, when the water assumes a deep green colour, surmounted by blue froth, and is let off into another vat called the beater, by means of a wooden peg made to withdraw at pleasure; this water is agitated, until the fæcula has separated, by persons called Danghers, who live in the jungle, and are brought from a distance, or others of the lowest caste, with an implement which consists of a semi-circular board fastened to a handle of convenient length; it is then allowed to subside, after which the water is drawn off carefully by means of small wooden pins, and the fæcula taken up from the bottom, whence it is conveyed into the boilers; this liquor is boiled at night, and allowed to cool, by which means more water is separated; it is again boiled in the morning, and drawn off upon the table, which consists of bamboos finely split, united together, and covered with a cotton sheet; through this it oozes with great rapidity at first, into a hollow space below, from which it is caught up and put back into the table. This operation continues until the fæcula has settled, and nothing but water oozes out, which is allowed to flow;

the indigo remains here until next morning, when it is carried to the press, which has small holes perforated for letting water escape, and is inlaid with cloths, into which it is put; it is pressed by screws until the water has completely separated, and the indigo is formed into a solid heavy mass. Next morning it is carried to the drying-house, where it is cut into cakes, and put upon bamboo gratings, or tables, to dry: this goes on slowly, without artificial help, and here it remains until packed up in chests and sent off to Calcutta. There are two cuttings, the morin, or first crop, and koonti, or second growth; after the manufacture is finished, a person called a mounsiff is sent out to measure, which he does in conjunction with the cultivator, by a survey of the indigo stalks that remain on the ground. There are three kinds of plant, viz. good, middling, and bad; for these five and a half, four and a half, and three and a half rupees are given; according to this measurement, the account total is made out, and matters are adjusted between the cultivator and planter: so that in case of a bad crop, the former is a loser as well as the latter. Thus I have given you a detailed account of indigo planting, and will now make some observations on indigo planters. The Tirhoot planters are a hard-working, healthy class

of men, who inhabit one of the finest districts of Lower India, and are generally addicted to field-sports, and the pleasures of the table; their factories are distant from each other (speaking of the extremes), so that social intercourse can only take place at particular times and seasons, when it is enjoyed with the most pungent relish, and conviviality is the order of the day. In consequence of their intercourse with, and residence among the natives, they speak and understand Hindostanee, and their language to each other is interlarded with Indian phrases. Every indigo planter has got his favourite omlah, who must be a clever man of business—he writes Persian letters for his master, informs him upon all points of custom with which he is unacquainted, makes bargains, and advises him how to act; in short, this person is generally the real manager, attaining over the other by his services and insinuations, an influence which subdues him more powerfully than authority. This favourite omlah always makes a handsome fortune, sometimes a large one; he receives perquisites from all natives employed at the different factories, presents from persons with whom he transacts business, and pickings from his master's property, who is often too much led by the nose to see this. Indigo planters generally neglect to tie the hymeneal

knot, and find it either more agreeable, or more convenient, to keep native mistresses, who have been all prostitutes, and I may venture to say, are not very remarkable for fidelity, whatever other good qualities they possess. A consumah, or khismutgar, occupies his master's place when absent; a gallant is entertained under the name of brother, and this yielding, wanton dame, plants horns fresh sprouting on her lover's front. In order to obviate the consequences which follow these freaks, abortion is resorted to, and practised to a scandalous extent; so that nothing is more common than hearing of this occurrence happening to a planter's mistress, cloaked under the name of a miscarriage—the lady has been frightened at seeing a snake or a rat, and accounts for it this way: a few of them have effrontery enough to palm the fruits of intrigue upon their master, and find some excuse or other for its complexion. The planters assume a superiority in point of rank over shopkeepers, and this class of traders, and are very tenacious about etiquette; if they can get admitted into the society of civil servants, it is the consummation of their ambition. To conclude, these country gentlemen of India, during the cold season, hunt and give parties, at which mirth, plenty, and hospitality prevail; Bacchus is lord of the ascendant, and they indemnify

themselves for the many dull, heavy days they have to pass during the rains and manufacture.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XX.

Since I have got into Tirhoot, I shall give you an account of the natives who inhabit that district, their domestic regulations, agriculture, religion, castes, customs, manners, learning, and amusements, as far as these have fallen under my observation. I must be understood at present as treating of the Hindoos, and shall reserve the Mussulmans for a separate description. The zemindars and respectable people, are in general fine looking, robust, and portly men, with large swelling chests, which they improve by exercises adapted for opening this member, bodies firmly set, and limbs finely proportioned and straight. The gait, the appearance of one of these men in walking, is really striking and noble; his right hand sustains the garment fastened round his loins, his left is at liberty and has full swing, his pace is long and striding, his body thrown for-

ward and full, his head erect, his air and expression of countenance commanding; such is the portrait which is presented to an observer who views the Hindoo, without being warped by prejudice. The working people, like those of all other countries, are coarser featured and darker than their superiors, owing to exposure to the sun: however, among these there are many fine looking men, and, on the whole, they are very passable in their appearance. Those writers who say the Hindoos are feeble, and begin to get old-looking at thirty, are, I conceive, totally unwarranted in making such an assertion; for, I think, respectable people carry their age as well as Europeans; although those who are much exposed to the sun, and badly fed, must, of course, decline sooner; the mens' hair, undoubtedly, gets grey at an earlier period than is usual amongst Europeans, which they ascribe themselves to the use of certain oils, but which, I should suppose, proceeds from the great heat caused by their turbans; however, this defect is not observable, for they shave the head, which is completely covered by their turban, and the youthful aspect of their faces is not spoiled by this badge of old age. People here do not live in that detached, scattered manner which is common in England, where a farmer has got his habitation distinct and

separate from others. In Tirhoot and other parts of India, high and low, rich and poor, live together in villages, which extend through the country like so many separate communities, having certain domestic regulations necessary to their comfort and well being, which it shall be my business to describe. Every village has got certain sub-divisions which are termed tolas annexed to it, and are generally designated by the name of that caste which resides in it; as, for instance, the bramin's tola, the mussulman's tola, the gwala's tola, &c.; for, in every village, the different castes and professions have distinct places of abode, or live in the tolas to which I now allude, at some distance from each other; each of these castes has its internal regulations, to which all the members must adhere, under the penalty of expulsion, and its officiating bramin or gooroo, who performs the ceremonies at festivals, and decides upon all matters connected with the infringement of caste. The observations I am about to make, do not extend nor apply to large towns, but are confined solely to villages and the country. I have stated in a former place, that lands are not parcelled out in estates, but divided among villages; also, that each village has got its fixed boundaries, and belongs to a landlord or zemindar. Under the zemindar, the establish-

ment of a village is as follows, viz. a gomasta for collecting the rent; putwary for writing the accounts; peons who act under them, and carry messages, collect the tenants, &c.; jetryots, who are the most respectable tenants, and have some authority amongst the ryots, who are common tenants. Every village has got a watchman who is called the chokedar, whose duty it is to be acquainted with all the bad characters in the village, and who is held responsible for any robberies that are committed; because, without his connivance they are not likely to happen. These persons possess a certain degree of respectability, and authority proportionate to their situations. The putwary and gomasta are respected on account of being the zemindar's servants, and holding an office of some trust; the jetryots, on account of family distinction or connexion, have an ascendancy over their fellows, and enjoy exemption from rent to a certain amount; as they are the leading men, the rest obey their command, and enlist under their banner, in case of any dispute with the zemindar or his servants. When this latter is non-resident, as must happen when he has a number of villages, then the jetryot's authority is very considerable; but when the zemindar has got only one village, in which he resides, their power is diminished, if not absorbed by his.

The zemindar of a village has a kind of feudal power amongst his tenants, and receives not only rent from them, but regard and obedience; in petty quarrels among each other he acts as arbiter and puts an end to their jarring by his decision; in quarrels with his neighbours, they espouse his cause and fight for him. In case of refusing to pay their rent, or slighting his commands, he chastises them; if he wants ploughs for tilling his farm, they give theirs; if he has made an indigo engagement, they are obliged to cultivate, and though they have leases, they are as submissive as if they had none; in this way a zemindar's authority is very considerable over his ryots; it seems a kind of patriarchal power that effects nothing by the operation of law; but every thing through the intervention of custom, intercourse, and authority. These men have got an ascendancy over the little community of which they are the head, which tends to strengthen their connexion, and establish order without militating against the authorities or the laws; it is a domestic regulation which has sprung from circumstances, and the necessity of union in a country where petty chiefs and tyrants have, at various periods, abounded; where the poor man's pittance was often made the spoil of a greedy plunderer, and association afforded the only means of safety. In case of

exaction, or ill-treatment by the zemindar, a ryot seldom seeks redress at law, unless the injury be of a flagrant kind, but leaves his village, and settles in some other; so that a zemindar's misconduct punishes itself, as his rents diminish by it. There is another class of men who hold villages, called tickedars, and kotkinnedars, or farmers; these persons agree to pay the zemindar a stipulated rent total, and get a lease from him for a certain time, during which they collect very rigidly, and make what profit is possible; they are not respected like the zemindars, but generally hated on account of their severity; if the leases expire during their tickedarship, they frequently demand an increase of rent so exorbitant that the ryots refuse to renew their leases, and pay their rents in kind, or else leave the village and settle in another. When they have recourse to this latter expedient, houses form no impediment, as a peasant's hut is soon constructed with a few beams of timber, bamboos, and grass; the principal part is a chapper or roof, which they endeavour to carry away with them. The bamboo is of inexpressible utility, and appropriated to various purposes by the natives of India. Besides houses, they make bedsteads, baskets, mats, fences, tables, &c.; in short, the bamboo is used for numberless agricultural and domestic occasions, and is

so suitable, that no other tree or shrub would adequately supply its place; it is attended, too, with no difficulty or trouble, as every one knows how to fashion it according to his particular wants. Owing to the system of farming, which is very prevalent at present, and the avarice of farmers, rents are rising fast; perhaps this may be reasonable, and the natural consequence of increasing wealth—it is more, it arises from a mercenary spirit, which would pin the poor to the earth, and trample on them to gratify its lust, which only counts the rupees it receives, not the sweat and sighs that contribute it. Oppressive rents are, in my mind, the greatest evil that can befall a country; the earth, our general mother and common grave, is parcelled out among her children, in such unequal portions, and so heavily taxed by one class of the community, that the others are unable to procure subsistence: are fatigue, and labour, and industry, to go for nothing but the support of a landlord? are the poor man's sweat, and his children's tears, to moisten the earth only for his benefit? what right has he in it more than they? according to the laws of nature he has none; the regulations of society have given him an artificial right, but it is one which should not be abused; it is one which is held by sufferance, and owing to the necessity

which all communities experience, of having different gradations in rank; let it then be used as an appendage of the social contract, in order to mark and support those distinctions, but do not convert it into an instrument of oppression, which exacts the last penny from poverty, and denies it a livelihood. The rent paid by tenants in India is very trifling compared with that paid by English tenants. In the part of the country where I resided, two rupees, eight annas, was the common rent given for rice lands; for corn lands, two rupees, one rupee, eight annas, and one rupee, according to their quality. Labourers are paid at the rate of five pice, or halfpence per day, so that this part of farming is very cheap compared to what it would be in other countries; two annas are given for a plough, and four annas for a hackry or cart, per day. Women, where the family is very indigent, go to the field and weed, or assist in the reaping season, but never do any laborious work; however, this is rare, as the poorest of them find employment in spinning thread, which they sell, or beating rice to separate the husk from the grain; a stick tipped with iron is used for this purpose, and the rice is placed in a circular trough. Children drive cattle to and from pasture, take care of them during the day, and perform the office of shepherds; so that

all, even the least among them, have some duty to perform, and contribute their mite toward the general stock; those boyish tricks of European children in robbing birds' nests, hunting after wild fruits and berries, are here unknown. The poor man's child follows its father to the field, and begins to work for a halfpenny, by which it gets inured to labour from dawning infancy. The low wages paid for manual labour in India, naturally surprise a European, who has been accustomed to such different rates of charge for service; however, the necessaries of life, and such as constitute their usual articles of food, are proportionably cheap; rice may be rated at a rupee per maund, which contains eighty-four pounds, and in a plentiful season is cheaper; other kinds of grain are still lower, barley and merooa, for instance, averaging at a maund and a half for the rupee; there is no machinery made use of in any trade or employment to supplant manual labour, so that all obtain work and subsistence; they walk in a path peculiar to themselves, no way anxious for epicurean luxuries, and practise abstemiousness both from inclination and habit. The poor man who earns five pice, eats his dinner of curry and rice, ties a cloth round his loins, and has another for his shoulders; poverty does not interfere with generation; this same

man has got half a dozen naked little urchins sporting about his door, or working with him in the field; it is a duty with them to beget children, and one which they never neglect to perform. When a young fellow is of an age to act the dues of Hymen, though naked and poor, he takes a spouse, and in a short time produces such a swarm of little people, as convinces one, fecundity does not depend on luxurious feeding. I don't know how they make it out, and get fairly through the world—but yet they do, and rear families of healthy children, who must work and be poor like themselves. The lower orders, which consist of the peasantry, mechanics, manufacturers, and servants in the employ of zemindars, are all dependant on a class of men called mahajuns, or money lenders; these persons form granaries in the village, provide poor people with grain and other articles at fifty or a hundred per cent; in unfavourable seasons they assist their dependants, in prosperous ones, pocket their earnings. A body of usurers in the heart of a society is an evil of gigantic magnitude, which saps its vigour, and keeps it constantly in a state of debility; however, it is one which has arisen from the necessities of the poor, and cannot be obviated. The causes to which, in my opinion, the mahajuny system so prevalent in India owes

its origin, are the following:—The uncertainty of crops; for, somewhat too much or too little rain, an irregularity in its commencement as to time; a flood or a drought are fatal to the husbandman's hopes, and often blast the most promising prospects; again, an accident happening the banks, reservoirs, and other works necessary for containing water, may be the ruin of whole villages; so that to the uncertainty of seasons I mainly attribute the poverty of the agriculturists; in a favourable one, they pay their rent, and have a large balance remaining, in an unfavourable one they are left wholly destitute. Perhaps a flood has swept away every thing, and unless they have amassed money they must starve. From these causes has arisen a body of men who are capitalists, able to assist them in cases of emergency, and who are repaid with usury for that assistance, in prosperous times. To prove how far the uncertainty of seasons affects cultivators in Bengal, I need only notice the situation of indigo planters, the embarrassments and debts in which they are involved, those who are ruined, and those who have made fortunes owing to the operation of these causes. There it is not uncommon, it is an occurrence of every year, to hear of some whose crops were swept away, and have contracted a heavy debt with their agent, or of their

total ruin and the sale of their factories; of others whose crops have escaped, in consequence of which they have made their fortunes. I merely state this circumstance, well known to all who are acquainted with the local relations of Bengal, in order to stamp confirmation on my opinion, by an acknowledged fact. Another cause which tends to nourish this evil, is the great number of persons who serve for trifling wages, and the still greater number who have nothing to depend on but their daily work. Until their pay becomes due, in case of sickness, if they should be out of employment, the assistance of a mahajun is necessary to them. Working people are never fed by their employers, the little pay they receive must purchase every thing, so that this person is requisite to provide them with necessaries; his assistance is indispensible, and he forms an important member of their little community. I shall here notice a subject to which I think it necessary to direct your attention, I mean the introduction or adoption of complicated machinery; such a measure I deprecate from my soul, and consider one of the greatest evils which could happen to India; any improvement, however admirable or ingenious, tending to supplant manual labour, would cause an overwhelming mass of misery and wretchedness; monied men of course would be

enriched, and might add considerably to their stores; but not all the ore ever extracted from the mines of Potosi—not all the gold that Peru and Mexico ever lavished on the world, could wipe away the tears or satisfy the hunger it would occasion. Let us view for a moment the actual situation of the people; in order to understand this question rightly. In agriculture, every species of work is performed by men; there are no threshing machines, or other devices to surpass their exertions; there are no mills for grinding corn, men or women are necessary for every thing; there are no factories with complicated machinery; no powers by steam or hydraulics, through which the man is sacrificed to his work, through whose superior efficacy his agency is rendered unnecessary, and the bread taken from his mouth. This is the real Dædalus destroying his son by his unhappy ingenuity. The manufacturer in India works under a tree, his loom consists of a few sticks, adjusted so as to support his web; himself is every thing, the machinery nothing. Now, the number of people who depend on the present order of things for subsistence is immense, who are too poor to embark in agriculture or trade for themselves; who, in short, have no other means of gaining a livelihood, so that the adoption of machinery

tending to render them less necessary than at present, would reduce millions of unhappy beings to a state of absolute starvation.

Agriculture in India is practised after a peculiar manner, and might appear very absurd to an English farmer, both in its implements and operation; however, it is perfectly adapted to the nature of the country, and, though improvements might be introduced in the implements of husbandry, those employed in England would no more answer than Indian ones would there; the soil is so light that an English plough tears it up in great furrows, which, I conceive, is by no means conducive to production, and the bullocks are so weak, that four or six are necessary to drag it along; from this you may infer how unfit it is for Indian agriculture, and that their own light ones answer their purposes much better. Their harness is of the rudest kind, consisting merely of a wooden yoke, and ropes by which it is attached to the plough, which has been already described, and is equally rude. The hackry or cart, consists of wooden spars fixed into a frame with interstices between each, about three inches wide, it tapers narrow towards the pole, to which the bullocks are yoked, having bamboos outside instead of traces. Horses are kept only for riding, whilst bullocks are yoked in the plough

and cart, perform every kind of domestic drudgey, and endure the heat better than any other animal they have got: they have a hump similar to the camel, beyond which the yoke is fastened in drawing, and prevented by it from slipping back; however, this part, after hard work, is galled and lacerated in a pitiful manner. The Tirhoot farmer never manures any lands, except those which lie adjacent to the village, and are appropriated for the production of tobacco, as all others depend upon their natural fertility, and the fructifying moisture received from the rains; in this respect, the Ganges and other rivers of India, are great fountains of fertility, that cause, more than any thing else, the plentiful produce with which it is blest; they give manure and moisture, without which the most fertile provinces in that country would become almost deserts. Sands, along that river, which, in another situation, would not produce a blade of grass, have got crops of indigo or grain; for the disadvantage of soil is compensated by the flood, and sediment, and heat, which enrich and make it fruitful. Rice, the most general crop, requires a complete bed of water, without which it cannot come to maturity or perfection, and the most productive paddy lands are those low stripes or vallies which lie beneath the level of the river, and in which its

water remains after the flood has subsided; of all grain crops, it is the most productive when it succeeds, and attended with the least difficulty, as nothing is requisite except a little ploughing and sowing; however, it is in many places precarious, owing to the want or lateness of rain. Farmers are obliged to throw up banks and mounds, to prevent the water from running off their lands, and also have reservoirs to contain a supply for future occasions; these works are generally made by the zemindar, being necessary for the prosperity of his village; disputes often occur, from one village cutting the embankment of another, in order to get its water. When the rain has been very scanty, and the rivers have not risen high enough, people from the neighbourhood collect and dam up small streams until their course is turned into the rice lands; when this is not practicable, there is an artificial mode of irrigation, by a machine called a careen: this consists of an excavated piece of palm-tree, which is supported by a fulcrum in the middle, but free at the extremities; a bamboo is placed above it, supported centrically by a slight scaffold; one end of the bamboo bears a weight, the other is attached by a rope to the careen upon which a man stands and irrigates his lands, the bamboo with its pendant weight acting as a lever. This

artificial irrigation is very inefficient, and a poor substitute for the natural one. No misfortune could happen to India so overwhelming as an interruption or cessation of rain; the dry parched lands would not supply a blade of grass, grain, vegetable, or esculent. The numerous herds of cattle would turn up the soil with their nose in search of nourishment, and perish through want of it; their carcasses would not benefit man, forbidden to eat of them, and would serve only to cause a pestilential stench; the overwhelming population would ransack for fruits, vegetables, or leaves, to satisfy their hunger; would scrape the bark from trees, and grind the branches to powder for sustenance, or crawl to the dried-up river, and slake their thirst from the sandy pool, swallowing mud and dirt, to gratify the cravings of nature; the wretch would perish amidst his wretched feast—the dead would lie where they fell, and the living crawl among their departed relatives, to expire in the same spot.

Wheat and barley are grown in the high lands, and give a good return; the natives make cakes of unleavened bread from them, which, when dressed along with vegetables, are very palatable, but do not make leavened bread or porridge from them. Oats are not indigenous, but have been introduced by Europeans; they thrive very well, and

are grown by indigo planters for their horses; being better adapted for this purpose, than any other grain. The former is very careful in the preparation and dressing of his fields, ploughing and weeding until they are perfectly clean. His labour continues from sun-rise till noon, then he unyokes his oxen, and permits them to graze during the rest of the day; whilst he goes to dinner, enjoys a sleep during the heat, and when it gets cool engages in some rustic occupation. Corn crops are always trodden out by cattle, as was customary amongst the Jews, who were forbidden by the Mosaic law to muzzle oxen when engaged in this occupation. Lands in Tirhoot give two, three, and when pushed to the utmost four crops. These of course cannot be very heavy in their return, however, the grower is supplied with sufficient of each for domestic consumption and support. Sugar-cane is not one of these ephemeral productions, but requires a year to come to maturity; it is cut into small pieces for manufacture, and put into a hollow wooden trough, fixed in the ground, called a kuloa. In the centre of this is placed a spar, about ten feet long, having a piece of wood projecting at right angles from its top, which is harnessed to bullocks and drawn round by them. As it goes round, the sugar-cane is pressed against the trough by the

spar in its centre, and its juice expressed, which falls into a receiver below; thence it is taken up, boiled and permitted to cool, when it forms into a solid mass. This is used by the natives in making sweetmeats, and is also mixed with lime for building. The cotton plant resembles indigo in its manner and time of growing, it requires a dry sandy soil, and is not much cultivated in Tirhoot. The cotton appears upon it first in a blossom, this gradually changes to a small round pulp, which when ripe is plucked off. It may not be improper to give some account of saltpetre here, being a production of the soil. Saltpetre appears upon lands like a white scurf, and no vegetable production whatever will grow upon them, so that, although the surrounding soil may be covered with rich crops, that particular place which contains this production, appears like a leper spot, white and bare. It is a great annoyance to farmers, and is not to be eradicated by digging, or any other means, for it possesses a vegetative power, and springs up again in spite of every effort to extirpate it. The process of manufacture, as practised by the natives, is very simple. They collect the earth, and put it into a clay kiln, and then it is watered and allowed to stand for some time. When the saltpetre has been properly extracted, the water is drawn off

and boiled; after this, being allowed to cool, it thickens and forms into flakes of saltpetre. A saltpetre factory is very rude in its formation, consisting merely of these kilns, a boiler and cooling pots. The company monopolized this trade when it was profitable, but now that it is not so, they have laid it open. Opium is a monopoly, from which they have hitherto derived vast profits; however, the price of that article has of late been greatly reduced, owing to measures taken by the Chinese government, to prevent the illicit introduction of it to that country, and the consequent want of a market. In opium districts the company give advances to ryots for cultivating the poppy, from which that drug is extracted. After the pulp of this flower has completely formed, and begins to mature, the farmer pricks it with a sharp instrument, and catches the juice which flows from it. In this manner he perambulates his poppy-bed, extracting juice from the flowers, and repeats this operation, until they are quite exhausted. The juice forms into a solid mass, and is given in to the collector, who pays the cultivator according to the quantum received. The measurement of lands in India is an important affair among agriculturists, and is performed with a bamboo stick, six cubits and a half long, called by them a luggy. There is

one kept for a standard by the collector, in order to prevent fraud, and fix its proper length. The measurer holds his luggy by the middle, and walks along, making each end alternately touch the ground. In this manner he takes the length and breadth of a field, whilst an accountant writes down the number of luggies, and makes the calculations. If the field be of an unequal superficies, of an oblong or angular figure, three, four, and five measurements are taken, and the mean is adopted. Zemindars are now getting very particular upon this head, and generally measure their villages, before renewing the ryot's leases; as they are frequently under-rated, owing to frauds in the old measurements. A village which contains twelve hundred acres, is perhaps rated at eight hundred, by which means, the ryots enjoy a large overplus, and to retain their profits, will give the measurer a handsome bribe, so that unless he be possessed of strict integrity, and well watched, he will incline to them. He can commit frauds, by throwing the luggy wide, or measuring the narrow part of the fields; by omitting corners and the like, also by connivance with the accountant, who may underwrite the true estimate. Planters measure their indigo lands in this way, and the same care is necessary on their part; however, all eyes are open now-a-days; old mea-

surements, favorable to the ryot, are going out of vogue, and giving place to new ones, that are both strict and severe. Although the soil produces fruits of every kind, horticulture is not much attended to, nor those fruits much in use amongst them that are esteemed by Europeans. The mango is their favorite, every village has got a grove of these trees, and every householder possesses a number of them. During the mango season, poor people live almost entirely upon this fruit, which is the most delicious and wholesome their country produces. Melons are extremely cooling, and agreeable during the hot weather, but pine apples are indigestible and unwholesome. Pomegranates, peaches, limes, oranges, figs, cuttel and tamarind, are also plentiful, and afford a variety to those who are fond of these things. Excellent cabbages, brocoli, peas, carrots, turnips, onions, and potatoes, are grown by Europeans, who rear these vegetables for their domestic comfort, but are not attended to by natives.

Sometimes, the husbandman's hopes are blasted by a puny but an overwhelming enemy, whose attack cannot be resisted in any way. Upon a lovely and serene evening, when the crops had felt and displayed the kindly influence of spring, I took a ride to breathe the fresh air and

enjoy the exhilarating sight. My attention was suddenly rouzed by a red cloud, which appeared to the south, and which I mistook for the flames arising from a burning village. It gradually increased and approached; my delusion vanished—they came—ten thousand myriads of locusts darkening the air, alighted and rested for the night on those very fields I had eyed with so much exultation. The inhabitants attempted to frighten them away by noise and the tinkling of brazen vessels; it was useless; they kept their quarters, covering an extent of country eight or ten miles long.

Their stench was rank and sickening, every spot was covered with their ordure. Next day their bed was a waste, not a plant had escaped these Harpies, the green and lovely crops had vanished. I observed trees that had been stripped by them, which did not shoot forth fresh leaves for a long period afterwards, and seemed dried of their vegetable juices in those parts which had been most exposed to attack. As oxen are reserved entirely for agricultural purposes, cow's milk is allotted for rearing the calves, and the natives use buffalo's milk principally in their families. The buffalo is considerably larger than a cow, fond of moisture and impatient of heat, its horns long, and hide the colour of an elephant's. The milk appears to a European quite inferior in

flavour and delicacy to cow's milk; however, the natives like it very well, and are not so sensible of the difference. Every village has got a large herd of oxen, cows, and buffalos, and farmers possess very considerable property in cattle; to see them all grazing in a common, convinces one that the inhabitants of these villages are by no means poverty ridden, and can afford to purchase the necessaries of life. The common breed of horses is small, consisting of tattoos or ponies, which graze about without controul, and carry their master when he goes abroad; those, however, kept by men of rank for show, are fine animals; the Poosa breed are considered the best in India, they are slight and elegantly made, and full of fire and mettle: they possess great fleetness, undergo fatigue well, but are too impatient to be ridden with ease; the Company's stud was formerly at Poosa, but has been removed to Ghazepoor; ambling is the pace most in vogue among Indian horsemen, which, though pretty, is not expeditious enough for an Englishman; the housing of their horses is made of scarlet cloth, fringed with purple, and tastefully ornamented, which is both very showy and comfortable for a rider, who appears to great advantage seated upon gaudy trappings, and moving along at a graceful amble. The goat is a favou-

rite domestic animal, and abounds every where; its milk is esteemed, and its flesh is almost the only animal food made use of; sheep are kept in flocks by a particular caste, and are sent for sale to a European market, but the Hindoos do not eat mutton, and use its wool only for making coarse coverlets. Swine and poultry are considered unclean, and only kept or made use of by persons of the harri caste.

I shall give a brief sketch of their religion, and as I proceed, shall remark certain points of coincidence or disagreement betwixt it and other religions, which stand as links of connexion, or barriers of separation between them, which lead the mind into a labyrinth of conjecture, from which there is no positive clue. The Hindoo religion, in its pure state, is an allegory which personifies creation, existence, and destruction, under the names of Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva; These three persons are merely agents of Brahm, or God, and have got numerous symbols which denote the duties attached to their various offices, and refer to the grand operations of nature through her different changes and acts. The religion of their Shasters is founded upon profound metaphysical research and contemplative abstraction, which embodies physical operations and effects into a system of religion, and argues the

subtle conceptions and philosophical attainments of its institutors. In this respect the bramins of India far exceed the Grecian sophists, or those of any other country; these confined their opinions and conceptions to mere assertion or argument; those reduced them to a permanent, tangible figure, by combining them with religion. All its regulations are designed for the purpose of establishing a priestly ascendancy, and have succeeded in raising a fabric of power on the basis of superstition which was never equalled in any other country. The institution of castes, deifies the high, and brutalizes the low. The spirit of their laws considers the latter a cypher, the former a deity. The brahminical monopoly of knowlege, and doctrines that establish brahminical superiority, reduce the other castes to a state of spiritual bondage and slavery. The power of the Pagan priests, or Roman catholic Pontiff of the Jewish Levites, or the Mahomedan Caliphs, fell far short of it; they have, at various periods, domineered, fluctuated, and fallen, but the authority of the brahmins has withstood the shocks of time, fanaticism, and conquest; like the pyramids of Egypt, the very name of whose founder is lost amidst the dust of antiquity; this religious pyramid of Hindostan still towers, a venerable fabric of superstition, whilst its archi-

tects, and their memory, have long since been swallowed up in eternity; the knot remains, although he who tied it has perished.

According to the Hindoo history, there are four joags, or ages, viz. the suttye joag, or golden age; the trita joag, or silver age; the dwapera joag, or brazen age; and the kalee joag, or iron age. The progress of vice in these ages corresponds with the terms by which they are expressed, until it shall reach its maximum, at which time all things will be destroyed by fire, the soul of man return to its source, the earth and elements to their original chaos. There are the vedas, the purannas, and the tuntra shasters; these last are said to be very much in vogue at the present day, as they inculcate less rigid doctrines than the others, and teach that a reliance on the gooroo, munters, and ceremonies, will secure salvation. Their polytheism consists of numerous fabulous personages, whose mythology is as obscene, and adventures as various, as those of the Grecian or Roman deities. The popular legends have got their Jupiter and Mars, Apollo and Mercury, their Juno and Venus, as much addicted to quarrels and love intrigues, to rapes and metamorphoses, as those whom Homer has immortalized, or Ovid adorned with the graces of his genius. Krishnu, Siva, Doorga, Hanywan,

Bresput, and Gunga, are similar to the former, and almost incline one to think they are the offspring of a common parent. In their domestic worship, also, the Hindoos resemble the Greeks, as every one has got his Thakor, or household god, to which he makes offerings of flowers or rice, and pours forth libations of milk. The Thakor is kept in their penetralia or inner apartment, protects them and their household from injury, and is the divus familiæ to whom their vows are made and libations poured; to pursue this similitude, the Hindoos have got their flood, their Deucalion and Pyrrha, or Porous and Parkouti—their four ages; their giants warring against heaven, and their Briareus vindicating its authority in Hanywan or the monkey. Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, resemble Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva, not only in their number but offices. Fraternization is apparent in so many particulars, that the coincidence, one would think, must have proceeded from some channel of communication and instruction. What were those different sects of cynics and stoics, of epicureans and pyrrhonists, but twin brothers of the numerous orders of fakirs, who abound in India? They were similar institutions, only modified differently, according to the difference of country. Pythagoras, the oldest of the Greek philosophers, was educated in

India, and after his return home, established a sect upon the principles which he had there imbibed; through his influence certain fables and instructions might have been adopted, and engrafted on the national religion; others, again, were borrowed from Egypt, so that the Greek polytheism was composed of branches culled from these two nations and twined round its own. Owing to a similitude which exists in some matters between the Jews and Hindoos, there are people who assert the Hindoo polytheism is derived from the Jewish theism; but such an opinion, I conceive, will, on examination, be found totally unwarranted. To begin with the father of the Jews, we find Abraham was a man possessed of flocks and herds, who led a wandering life in search of pasture and water; who was married to his sister, and not addicted to jealousy, being used to deny his wife from prudential motives. The Hindoos have been always a stationary, agricultural people; abhor marriages within consanguinity, and are extremely jealous. The Jews considered circumcision as a distinguishing mark and sacred institute of their religion; the Hindoos never practised it. The Jewish prophets communed with heaven personally: the Hindoos never dreamt of such a thing, but practised astrology. The Jews delighted in the fat of rams and

bullocks, and were promised them as a reward for good conduct. The Hindoos reverence the cow, and would not shed its blood or taste its flesh to preserve their lives. The Jews were dreadfully intolerant; the Hindoos tolerant to every religion or sect. The Hindoos built temples of worship; Abraham placed a stone upon any spot which he wished to consecrate, and the caaba, or stone, was venerated by the Arabian tribes, until Mahomet arose, when the stone was supplanted by the koran. Upon going into Egypt the Jews remained a distinct people, and adhered to the worship of Abraham; upon leaving it their religion continued the same, though their institutions and legislature assumed a new form under their leader, Moses; and, at this period, we observe something like a similarity in the division into tribes, establishment of a hierarchy, &c. As to the first point at issue, there is a material difference between the Jewish and Hindoo tribes: the one are intended as barriers of separation, as badges conferring honour and dishonour; the other merely as marks of distinction or classification, ranking the Hebrews under their respective ancestry. The Hindoo tribes determine rank, and establish pre-eminence; the Jewish do not, and only serve to distinguish genealogies. Loss of caste is the terror of a Hindoo; such a punishment was

unknown amongst the Jews. The Levites and brahmins, though at first sight alike, will be found, on nearer inspection, to differ materially. According to the constitution established by Moses, the Levites not only officiated as priests, but held the reins of temporal authority, and, in the person of their high-priest or judge, established a hierarchy. The brahmins of India, although the highest and most respectable caste, never formed a hierarchy, for their power was totally distinct from that of the prince, who might belong to the lowest caste; they officiated as priests, and enjoyed family respectability, but the princely authority was another question, and might belong to any one; the account of both respecting the creation, tallies in a few leading features, but is totally different in minute particulars. Moses' regulations respecting ablutions, unclean beasts, and the like, are similar to theirs; but his legislation is quite dissimilar, being juster, more rational, and more vindictive than the Hindoo code; in short, it is my opinion, though there may be a resemblance in some particulars, there is nothing which denotes a common origin between these two religions. Abraham seems to have been descended from an Arabian family: the scene of his life is laid in or near that country; his mode of living was exactly that of a wandering Arab at

the present day, excepting their predatory habits, to which he was not addicted. Moses was educated in the court of Pharaoh, instructed in the Egyptian learning, jurisprudence, and priestcraft; so that, we might more rationally infer, that the institutes of Egypt and Judea are connected by a common origin, rather than those of India and Judea. Notwithstanding the people worship a plurality of gods, they acknowledge a supreme Being, whom they term Khoda, and consider superior to all the rest; in short, that they are only genii, or ministers, employed by him in superintending the affairs of our world; that he sends the orders of life and death, and is the great power by whom all things exist. The common pagodas to which people usually go for the purpose of worship, are provided with a large stone, on which a small emblem is cut, which represents the genital members, called by them mahadeo, or mahadeva; upon this worshippers pour milk and rice, mutter a prayer, give a pice, make their salam, and retire. The mahadeo obtains more general homage than any other object of devotion in Bengal, whilst other deities have got places of summary sanctity to which they are attached, and where they are adored; the mahadeo is found in all places, every rustic temple has got one, the peasant invokes his favour returning from labour, and wipes the

sweat and dust contentedly from his brow, happy in the idea that his prayer has been accepted. Places of great sanctity owe their reputation to some circumstance connected with their mythology, or to a local cause; thus Janekpore is celebrated, because it is said two of their deities were married there; Hazipore, because the Ganges and Gunduc unite at that place; Hurdwar, because the Ganges issues out of a cavity which resembles a cow's mouth. At these places annual fairs are held, and people come from all parts with various articles of merchandize, in order to attend them. Turkey, Cabul, Moultan, Delhi, Persia, Nepaul, Thibet, and Bengal, send forth inhabitants to these fairs for the purpose of commerce or worship. I know nothing more worthy the attention of a European, than to go here and behold people from such different countries collected together, to observe their habits and manners so dissimilar, and trace the distinctions which place and situation impress upon men's physiognomy. In these celebrated pagodas are images of certain divinities, concerning whom some fable is related, which sanctifies the place, as of their birth, marriage, escape, or metamorphosis; crowds hurry in to worship, without examining whether it is true or false, discharge this duty to their consciences, pay a small fee,

and retire; perhaps, it's the same case with most other nations; at all events, let them believe, let them worship, and let them be at peace. Persons of sanctity have a peculiar piece of devotion, which strikes one's attention very forcibly; it is a practice of counting beads, and repeating the name of Brahm after every bead, as Roman catholics are accustomed to count their rosary. How this practice originated in the Roman catholic church, I am not historically informed, but should suppose it was derived from India through some channel or other, and adopted by the popish church, as many of the old Roman customs have been. At all events, the fopperies of religion are pretty much alike in every country, and whether this supposition be right or wrong, we may learn from it, that the internal sense and meaning, not the external trappings, should be attended to. Besides domestic and public, there is a third species, which I would term rural worship: this consists in a custom of consecrating certain trees, of these the pepel is most reverenced, which grows to a great, sometimes to an astonishing size; no Hindoo would dare to lay an axe to its root. Small images of gods, cows, elephants, &c. made of clay, are placed under it, and looked upon with great reverence. The mango tree is also so far respected by them,

that a Hindoo considers it disgraceful to sell or cut one down; it was a similar feeling that actuated our ancestors of old, and made the oak sacred to the Druids; that adoration paid to the Ganges and other rivers by the Hindoos, as also the high estimation in which they hold cows, seem to me to be sentiments originally derived from the grandeur of one, and utility of both. Different nations have had various objects of paramount sanctity. The Greeks, Delphos and its oracle; the Jews, their temple; Persians, their sacred fire; and Hindoos, the Ganges; all these distinctions owe their birth either to tropical causes or venerated traditions. Persia abounded with subterraneous fire, and this became an object of devotion. The Ganges imparts fertility to an extensive country, and is of inexpressible utility to a commercial people, therefore it is venerated; Delphos was the seat of inspiration and prophesy—the temple of the Most High. Sacred things depend at first upon slight foundations, but at length, through time and obscurity, tower into magnificent and venerable fabrics. India is a warm country, in which frequent ablutions are necessary to keep the body in health, and water, for drinking, is peculiarly grateful: from these causes it gradually becomes sanctified in the estimation of a simple and

primeval race; thus, for instance, if a European touch a Hindoo's food before immersion in water, this will not prevent him from eating it; but if, after immersion, the European touch it, a Hindoo would abhor it for food; whoever digs a well is considered to have performed a meritorious act, but who makes a tank, a most meritorious one. This veneration, then, for water in general, at length seeks a centre, which may be considered the most sanctified, and on which its attachment may be rivetted; it finds that naturally in the most noble river India contains, whose urns fertilize their land, and bosom upbears their commerce. The Ganges, sacred source of plenty and profit! becomes a deity; again, owing to the excessive heat, horses, buffalos, and other animals, are unfit for agriculture; in the mild and patient ox, the Hindoo finds his most faithful servant, by whose exertions his land is rendered fit for cultivation, and whose back bears the harvest to his door: when returning from the field heated and parched with thirst, the cow presents her udder and affords a beverage more cooling and grateful to him than the wines of Shirauz and Iran. Where is the man, where is the monster sanguinary enough to raise his knife against the throat of such a servant and friend? Let the mark of Cain be affixed to his forehead, let him be an outcast, and ab-

horred! Such are the feelings that arise when we behold the services of this useful animal in India, and thus it becomes an object of veneration. To utility, then, to utility alone, I trace the veneration of the Hindoos in these particulars, whilst their polytheism, originally a pure and metaphysical allegory invented by philosophers, has been corrupted by priestcraft, superstition, and the people, into a fabulous and romantic mythology.

The Hindoos, upon common occasions, offer flowers, rice, and milk, to their deities; on solemn ones, animals. In bathing and sacrificing to inferior rivers, they offer a kid; but at Gaia, which is a noted place upon the Ganges for people to worship and bathe, buffalos are offered. Some of the Hindoo Rajahs used formerly to sacrifice men; however, this was always a rare occurrence, and latterly, I have never heard of such a thing except upon one occasion. A person was detected some time ago endeavouring to force a man from his village within our territory, and it appeared, upon examination, he was employed by the Jaypore Rajah's brother-in-law for that purpose, whose wife is barren; upon which account he resorts to this infernal practice, in order to obtain the blessing of children. The Rajah had been informed of this man's proceedings, and

forbad him to sacrifice any of his subjects, upon which he endeavoured to obtain a man from the Company's territories, when his agent was detected. Persons devoted in this way are offered to Parvati. May such bloody devotees be slain upon their own altar, and infamy overwhelm them for ever! In all religious ceremonies, all their forms of worship, bathing is enjoined, and constitutes a part; it is a purifier which frees them from uncleanness, rendering them fit to appear before the priest and the sanctuary. As the metempsychosis is an essential article of their creed, so has it a marked and potent influence over their actions. Owing to the opinion, that friends and relatives may exist in those various animals by which they are surrounded, cruelty to the brute creation is completely curbed; however, it is to be observed, the Hindoos do not refrain altogether from the use of animal food. They are fond of kid and fish, and eat of them freely at their festivals; other animals are equally forbidden to them, and repugnant to their taste. Naturally inclined to a light vegetable diet, religion and inclination go hand in hand; however, as I have just stated, flesh is not absolutely interdicted, and those who, from conscientious or other motives, deny themselves this indulgence, make a vow to that effect, which is expressed

by tying the throat; and, until this vow is made, all castes may eat certain kinds of animal food. Their idea of a future state is closely connected with the metempsychosis; for, through it, they think punishments are awarded, and the wicked have to undergo innumerable changes amongst the most odious beasts—as tigers, swine, jackalls, dogs, and the like; whilst people of a better description pass into a more favoured animal, such as the ox, or become men again; and those who are very good, are received into the house of God, and enjoy beatitude in a state of absorption. Where did the reveries of religion begin, and where are they to end? they commenced with man's weakness and infirmities, they were given as a staff to help him through the rugged path of life; they end in futurity; their setting is surrounded by mists which will never be cleared away to a living eye.

The belief in predestination is cherished and implicitly relied on by all classes of Hindoos; it is an opinion which they always carry about them, and apply to every circumstance in life. Does good or bad fortune happen to any person, has any one met with an accident, or committed a criminal action, "it was written over his name" is their invariable reply. The god Vidhata, they say, on the sixth day after a child's birth, comes

to the house, and writes its fate on its forehead. From this opinion proceeds that apathy which is so prominent a feature in the Hindoo character; that torpid indifference with which they view the most uncommon occurrences, or atrocious crimes. The efficacy of absolutions to be obtained by bathing in the Ganges, feasting brahmins, and doing penance, is another precept of their shasters, and one which has a very prejudicial effect on the morals of the natives. The ease with which pardon is obtained encourages the commission of crimes; the fatality that impels is an excuse to their conscience; so that sheathed in the armour of these adamantine opinions, the criminal's breast is incapable of remorse, and general demoralization is the natural consequence, when a belief in them is generally propagated and firmly established.

The brahmins calculate eclipses, also pretend to be acquainted with astrology, and the calculation of nativities; whilst the laiety put implicit confidence in their predictions, and consult them upon all occasions. Such brahmins only as are considered very learned, profess the calculation of nativities; on this occasion the calculator must be informed of the moment when the child was born, with some other particulars, upon which data he commences operations, and determines the length

of its life. The nativity is called by them gunum-putta, and people in good circumstances generally have them made out for their children. There are certain days unlucky to travel east, others to travel west, and some for travelling at all, when Busput presides. There are certain times when it is unlucky to commence any business, such as ploughing, sowing, making a bargain, &c. others, when it is lucky; upon these occasions, upon all emergencies, upon all affairs of importance, the brahmin is consulted, and they are influenced entirely by his decision; he forbids or approves, he determines the time and season; a haruspex among the Romans was not more authoritative. There is another species of superstition, which was once very prevalent amongst ourselves, viz.—the belief of ghosts and witchcraft; the ghost they believe in and fear, is that of women who die in childbed, whom they term churrelles; this apparition they say visits men at night in their sleep, forms an amorous connexion with them, and continues its enjoyments, until the lover gets exhausted and sinks into his grave. Every village has got its witch, who is commonly some unfortunate old woman, time has shrunk up and bent towards the earth. Unhappy being! thy wasted form, and trembling hand, and furrowed cheek, are considered by thy ignorant brethren as deposi-

taries of mischief, possessing demoniacal power. Does not the grave soon enough close upon its victims, that age should be thus trampled upon? Witchcraft they believe to be performed by sprinkling the blood of an animal at their threshold, making certain figures, and uttering spells which they think are all-powerful, and tremble at their consequences. A person who suspects witchcraft has been levelled against his family, applies to the brahmin, and gets his house exorcised before he will venture to live in it. To hear a man complain that this evil has happened him is by no means uncommon, whilst as much terror and apprehension are endured on account of it as could be inflicted by real injuries. They believe in the efficacy of charms and relics; the former they term muntre, and make use of to cure the bite of snakes, and certain kinds of sickness; the latter consists of beads and small silver plates to fasten round the arm, which have been consecrated by some devout brahmin, and are considered preservatives against sickness, witchcraft, or accidents.

The fakirs, or philosophers, or monks, are a class of ascetics, who delight in idleness and wandering about; there are various orders of fakirs, for they enlist in the service of different deities or patrons, as monks enroll themselves under the

banners of different saints; whilst some amongst them possess real sanctity, and lead the life of most rigid devotees, others embrace this profession, in order to avoid working, who prefer the humiliations of mendicity to the more trying fatigues of labour. Some amongst them adopt a disagreeable position, such as turning the arm upward, and keeping it for years in this manner; others in clenching their fists until the nails grow through their hands; a third, in wallowing amongst ashes, or pressing the earth with their belly, whilst their legs, thighs, arms, and head, are raised from the ground, remaining in this fatiguing posture until exhausted and covered with perspiration, their wearied members sink upon the earth; some indulge in solitary reveries, wander through the fields and jungles alone, and approach the tiger without terror, for they think, and the people think their sanctity is sufficient to protect them against the attack of ravenous beasts; these persons acquire a knowledge of roots and simples, profess to cure malignant disorders, such as the leprosy and spleen, and are held in high estimation. There is one sect of fakirs called ajoras, who resemble the ancient Cynics in their conduct and opinions. They have no caste, eat beef, pork, jackalls, and substances of the filthiest kind; perform the necessities of nature in public, without

shame; carouse until intoxicated, and mingle with their women promiscuously. Such fakirs as wish to obtain an opinion for sanctity, beside abstaining from all animal food, make use of certain infusions which cause impotence. I have been informed that chillies, taken in an immoderate quantity, will have this effect, and that they are made use of by these persons until all desire or capacity for venery is done away with. Some fakirs carry their abstinence to such a pitch, that they will not accept of more than suffices for one meal at a time, and fast for a period incredible to Europeans, which seems to exceed the powers of human endurance, and nothing but long habitude could enable them to undergo. I have heard instances of their fasting twenty days, and even longer at one time. To conclude with these gentlemen; those among them who are very abstemious and sanctified, are looked upon by the people with great reverence, whilst the common herd are considered as mere strolling beggars, who cloak their laziness beneath the sheltering garment of religion.

I shall give a brief description of the Hindoo castes, as they constitute a prominent part of Hindoo institutions, and form the principal link in the chain of brahminical despotism. There are four great tribes, viz.—brahmin, sittri,

beise, and sudder. Their fables have allotted a particular part of brahma, from which these four tribes were produced, which marks the degree of honour attached to them, and the avocations for which they are destined. The brahmins, who are seers and priests, come from his head, the seat of intelligence. The sittri, who are soldiers, from his arms, the members useful for offence and defence. The beise, or merchants, from his thighs, which possess muscular strength and support the body. The sudder, who are mechanics and menials, from his feet, which kiss the dust, and denote the humility of their condition. The high castes exercise over the low a superiority and right of exclusion, which confines the latter to mean, servile employments, and fixes them in a rank from which no display of superior talents or praiseworthy conduct can ever extricate them; even those among them who obtain wealth and property are humbled before the superiority of caste, and submit to it. Suppose a sudder, by good fortune and military enterprize, were to attain sovereign dignity, the humility of caste would attach itself to his regal state, and the prince would be honoured by eating of his servant's leavings, who claimed a higher rank in this particular; his temporal power would be respected and feared; the subject and slave would salute him with prostra-

tion, but his caste would banish from the social hearth or royal table all persons of a more noble tribe than himself. In one point, however, the severity of caste relaxes, for women of high caste can marry the sovereign, though of low caste, or no caste at all. In this manner the Mogul emperors were accustomed to marry the daughters of Hindoo rajahs, and contracted these alliances from motives of policy. The penal laws against Roman Catholics in some countries, and Protestants in others, savour of the system upon which the institutions of caste are designed. There are three kinds of brahmins, viz.—learned, priest, and zemindar brahmins; the learned are principally derived from Benares, where they study the shasters and sacred writings, handed down by their ancestors, also learn astronomy and astrology. The priests officiate in their pagodas, and direct the ceremonies; for it is to be observed, among the Hindoos, religious worship, and the perusal of their sacred writings, are practically distinct, although the former is directed and regulated by the latter. In fact, religion among the Hindoos consists entirely of ceremonies and offerings, the learned brahmins permitting none to read the text but themselves.

The zemindar brahmins possess villages, and follow agriculture, or other occupations not dero-

gatory to their caste; they cannot hold the plough, nor labour with oxen in any shape, but may sow, weed, and reap; however, they avoid menial occupations, and have servants for these purposes, unless very poor. They are proud, intriguing, and turbulent; much addicted to quarrels and lawsuits among each other, and very troublesome to Europeans, who have affairs to transact with them. Indigo planters find it very difficult to get their business properly managed in any village where brahmins are the principal residents. Ragapoots of the sittri tribe are addicted to arms, and are the soldier caste of India; they are braver, franker, and more tractable than the brahmins; not so much addicted to litigation and intrigue; in short, far superior to them in natural or acquired dispositions. These men have got a certain honesty and sincerity about them, that is not common among the other castes, and in my opinion deserves to rank above them for moral qualities; inferior to the brahmins in caste, and born to the profession of arms; their conduct is less assuming, but more decisive, less wily, and more upright. The Beise tribe consists of bankers, brokers, goldsmiths, shopkeepers, &c. who carry on the trade, and may be considered the mercantile community of India.

These persons are inferior in caste to the two

former; are submissive in their manners, and expert in business. The rich among them keep banks, whilst the inferior class, who abound in every village, have shops in the bazaar for retailing grain, trinkets, spices, and other necessaries. The sudder tribe consists of persons who follow the inferior handicrafts and trades, which, as in most other countries, are allotted to the mobility; the servants, or rather slaves, rank under it, and may be called the property of the higher tribes, who have, according to the Hindoo customs, a hereditary right over them and their offspring. This system of hereditary slavery is certainly very arbitrary, but accords with the principles of Hindoo caste, which admit of no deviation; for so far is this system acted upon, that women are prostitutes by inheritance, as the daughter of a kusbi or harlot embraces her mother's profession, and in due course becomes one herself; in temper they are lowly and submissive to a degrading and excessive degree; so true it is that men's minds and manners take a turn or direction from circumstances, and are haughty or lowly according to their impulse. Upon these many inferior divisions and mixed castes are grafted, as every handicraft, trade, or profession, has its particular caste; however, all of them rank under the above-mentioned tribes, or are descended from mixtures

between different tribes, and are divided into distinct castes. Below them all, and according to their way of thinking, a degraded, polluted race, is the harri caste, which consists of mithees, who sweep the temples of Cloacina; and chaumars or mootshees, who are shoemakers by profession, and eat beef, pork, or any thing else. I have often seen one of these persons, when a bullock has died, strip off a portion for his own use, whilst vultures and pariar dogs stood round, awaiting his departure to devour the remainder. There is a numerous body of men called mugs or danghers, who inhabit jungle districts, and travel in search of work through the different towns or provinces; also others, called pariars, from living among the hills, which are occasionally seen rising like mounds along the Ganges, as if to prevent a deviation from its course; these persons are of a very low caste, or rather no caste at all, and follow a kind of mongrel religion, adhering to Hindooism in some particulars, but in others deviating and substituting superstitions of their own; their restrictions respecting food are very trifling, and those of them who remain at home, depend in a great measure on the chase for subsistence; they are very inoffensive in their manners, but more uncouth and ignorant than the lowlanders; are dark complexioned, addicted to toys, decorating

their hair with flowers and superstitious observances, like other barbarous people; their minds suit their country, which has not yet been subjected to culture, and are as wild as the jungle they inhabit, differing from their more polished neighbours as much as the inhabitants of two distant regions could be expected to do. A pariar once took me into his house, and pointed out a number of the jaw-bones and tusks of wild hogs, telling me these were the penates to which he paid devotion and sacrifice. The wild hog constitutes their principal article of food, and to testify their gratitude they have deified his bones. The character of these danghers differs totally from that of the civilized Hindoos, as they are much addicted to wandering about, and capriciously changing their place of employment; are impatient of control or correction, and totally devoid of subtlety or jealousy. Of those who go abroad, the married men are few compared to the unmarried, so that adultery is as much in vogue among these simple people as with any nation or community I know of. Elopement, so essential to romance, and so dear to young lovers, is a very common act with them, and the mother of half a dozen children elopes with her paramour; should she fall into the offended husband's hands, after due chastisement inflicted, he restores her to

her former place, as if nothing had happened amiss. Besides these families I have enumerated, who are the aboriginal inhabitants of India, there is a class of men called nuts, who are altogether distinct from the Hindoos. They reside in tents, lead a vagrant life, practise knavery, jugglery, and mountebank tricks, and tell fortunes. They go the round of different villages, and encamp at them until their services are no longer necessary. In short they are of the same family, and no way different from gypsies in Europe.

The Hindoos are deeply versed in genealogy, and every family enjoys its measure of respectability, owing to circumstances connected with its antiquity, former rank, or place of descent. All brahmins are not of equal caste; those descended from Kinouge, formerly capital during the Hindoo dynasty, are men of high caste, as also, Sotee and Cashi brahmins. Zemindar are the lowest. These observations apply to the other tribes, and each has its causes of distinction, or marks of respectability. A rajah or other wealthy person generally marries into some poor family more honorable than his own, and gives the bride's father a sum of money equivalent to the respect acquired; for in this manner a family's caste or respectability can be increased. I knew a poor brahmin of high caste, who had at least thirty wives through the

country, with each of whom he received a present on account of the honor conferred by his alliance; for a Hindoo will readily sacrifice his daughter's domestic peace to improve the caste of her offspring. Caste is a species of family pride, which religion, antiquity, and prejudice have stamped upon their minds more firmly than any other impression they are capable of receiving. The records of their ancestors, the domestic history of their families constitute its basis; the earliest instructions of their infancy annex reverence to its institutions; the mind and ideas of their fathers are concentred upon it as a *suprema et immutabilis lex*. What wonder then since, surrounded by all that is sacred, all that is dear to man, their reverence and regard should be rivetted upon it, with a tenacity, which neither shining advantages, nor the fear of death are able to sever. It is an institution which enters into their occupations and lives, whose effects are observable in all their actions. Brahmins wear a thread round their neck, which is termed the poita or genou; it is assumed at five years old, and in some measure corresponds with our baptism; so that it may be termed the brahminical baptism. Loss of caste is the greatest misfortune can befal a Hindoo, and may be incurred by various causes. Their regulations respecting eating are very strict; for, if a man

of high caste were known to eat the food left, or prepared by one of low, he would be excommunicated. Upon the other hand, low caste people are highly honoured in eating food prepared by those of high caste. The restrictions on people of high caste are much more severe than on those of low. Some brahmins would forfeit it if known to have commerce with a prostitute; if their wives be proved to have committed adultery; if their sisters or daughters have intrigued with a European; in short, whatever brings shame upon them, such as being beaten with a shoe, will, though not take away, injure their caste. All Hindoos would lose caste, by killing a bullock, eating beef, or along with a person out of caste; however, it is to be observed as a general maxim, that people of low degree have not the same pride, and are not so strictly regulated as those of high. A Hindoo's caste may receive injury from various causes, such as a bullock, which he has tied up, dying in its stall. Upon this occasion it is necessary to bathe in the Ganges, and feast the brahmins before he can be restored. Persons excommunicated are complete outcasts from society, with whom no man will eat, intermarry, or hold commerce; whilst they and their offspring are rejected to the latest posterity. There is no repentance allowed, no mercy seat to which they can appeal for favour;

when once gone, it is gone for ever. In order that a person be excommunicated, it is necessary, that his brothers by caste should shun his company; whilst he who labours under the anathematizing stigma, can demand enquiry from the heads or elders of his tribe, and is acquitted if the allegations cannot be proved against him.

Although the Hindoos are very frugal in their domestic economy, at ceremonies or festivals, they launch out into heavy expences, so that families are impoverished by their frequent occurrence. Their friends and caste must be feasted, dresses and articles for show must be purchased, and a train of musicians and followers enlisted, attended by whom, the bridegroom visits his bride's house in state; himself, borne in a palanquin, whilst, if wealthy, elephants, horse and foot compose his nuptial attendants. When a death happens the friends must be again feasted, as a farewell to their departed brother's manes, also among brahmins upon assuming the genou. Besides these festivals, which are indispensable, there are feasts given to brahmins at stated periods, by persons who wish to gain a reputation, or expiate some offence, for according to their mode of thinking, to feast brahmins is a most righteous act. The Hindoos always form a matrimonial connexion among strangers, and if the most distant affinity

exist between two families, it will prevent their intermarrying.

A particular time of the year is appointed, which generally falls in March, and lasts fourteen or twenty days, during which couples enlist under the banner of Hymen, and marriage alone occupies their thoughts. During these joyous bridal days, the air resounds with music and amorous glees, whilst spousal processions are seen upon every side, and the chain of human existence is prolonged by ten thousand votaries, who forge its links. The new breath of spring, with its prolific power, invigorates them, and her genial influence seems exerted on purpose to stimulate their nuptial enjoyments. Happy hour—it is the happiest they will know! Among inferior castes the custom of espousing their children prevails, which is performed when the parties are five or six years of age, and the consummation or gowna follows when they arrive at maturity; but the children of brahmins and people of respectability marry after they have attained maturity, and are not espoused as the others. Here, there are no love matches, no romantic passions; the parents choose partners for their children without consulting the inclinations of the latter; taking care, however, that their appearance may correspond, without any marked disparity between them: the young

people who are thus mated, come together and love each other as well as if their union was the effect of choice and consent.

The funeral rite is performed without show, and with very little ceremony; upon a man's demise, the family, but more especially the females, commence a violent outcry and lamentation, which is kept up for a short time; a few hours after the corpse is carried on a bed to the pile and burned, attended only by the nearest relatives. After the corpse has been consumed, the friends shave their mustachios, beard, and head, for this is their mourning rite and symbol of grief; no change of garment takes place, no sable trappings are assumed; but the simple act of shaving expresses their sorrow, and seems intended to denote, that their pride and manhood are withered by the loss they have sustained.

Jealousy is one of the most powerful emotions in the mind of a Hindoo, and rules his breast along with a few other leading passions to which he is constitutionally subject; naturally amorous, the object of his love is watched, and guarded as strictly as that of his avarice; divided enjoyment would poison his heart with inexpressible agony, whilst his ideas of female virtue are not very flattering to the sex. It is a proverb among them, that a woman melts before a man like butter

before the fire: acting then upon this principle, female fidelity is not relied upon, nor exposed to much temptation; confinement and secrecy are thought the best safeguards of its purity. Among the high castes, widows are not permitted to marry again; in consonance with that spirit of jealousy which immures their wives, which connects a woman's fidelity with her husband's caste, and is deeply rooted in their souls; from it has arisen a species of false delicacy which I cannot avoid mentioning: to enquire after a Hindoo's wife is an insult; to speak of him as a father-in-law or brother-in-law, is an affront, and used by them as a term of abuse; to talk of his daughters, or make any enquiry concerning them, wounds his feelings; so that this temper extends even to the unavoidable connexions of life. Widows, who are under such a severe restriction, generally, however, find means to indemnify themselves, and form an illicit connexion with some person in the village where they reside; in spite of jealousy, maugre her train of Argus keepers, the widow, whose youth is devoted in barren fidelity to a deceased husband, finds means to gratify the passion of love, whose fire burns within her veins, and prompts her to enjoyment at every hazard. The principle of life, imbibed from these illicit pleasures must be destroyed, in order to save her

own and family's reputation; the sacred spark of existence must be extinguished to preserve them from shame: in consequence of the thing being habitual and common among them, they know how to accomplish it, in most cases, with safety; however, casualties sometimes ensue from it, and the mother falls a victim to her unnatural attempt. Where shall we gather flowers to plant upon her grave? there need none, let it be bare; but let the tears of charity and pity bedew her dust. The natives of India build their houses in a hollow square, within which the women work, and are screened from observation, whilst the wives of poor people, or men in moderate circumstances, go to the river and bathe, and may be seen abroad occasionally; those of high rank are kept in close confinement, and never beheld by men. The intercourse between man and wife is accompanied with considerable reserve, as women are not permitted to eat with their husbands, but use their leavings, or cook a separate dinner. There is another, and, I should think, a more difficult point to attain. A wife does not converse with her husband during the day, but keeps a reverential silence before him, so that the Hindoo ladies have attained a taciturnity, not very common amongst those of Europe; the time for seeing them to advantage is at fairs, to which

they accompany their fathers and husbands; upon such an occasion, fine featured, and, indeed, beautiful women are numerous, whose soft expression, and delicate tournure of countenance, make us forget the difference of complexion, or rather convince us, that complexion does not constitute the desirable in woman. Beauty, even beauty is determined by caste; brahmin women are considered the handsomest, those of the Harri family the ugliest; this is easily accounted for: the one live retired, feed daintily, and have abundant time to devote to the care of their persons and improvement of their charms; the other, exposed to the sun and weather, become dark and coarse, assuming a figure that corresponds with their harassing duties and lowly condition; so that among these classes, Hindoo beauty is seen in eclipse; but visit a respectable man of high caste, if your eye can penetrate his zenana, it will behold women of the most delicate form and agreeable features. To their children they are kind and indulgent, very rarely correcting them even in the most gentle manner; and a degree of affection subsists between parent and child, which does honour to their hearts and feelings as men. Instances of a son acting undutifully to his parent are rare, whilst the kindness of kindred endears them to each other, and

sweetens their lives; indeed, the links of relationship with them are more extended than with us, and diffuse a spirit of affection among them; thus, sons of the same parents are brothers, cousins are brothers, persons born in the same village are brothers, and people of the same caste are brothers; inferiors call a superior father, by way of respect, and young people give an old man the same appellation. If a dependant have incurred his superior's displeasure, he uses the endearing name of parent, in order to mollify him, associates his ancestors along with himself, and declares their unwillingness to offend, as well as his own. "I have eat your bread and salt," is an expression which implies the gratitude due from a protegé to his supporter, and conveys, according to the spirit of the text, a sacred obligation which is reverenced of them by word of mouth, if not by deed. Young men are seen walking with their arms round each other's neck, and are not ashamed to display every external mark of affection. When two men wish to form a friendship together, they exchange turbans, which is deemed to give a sacred sanction to their connexion; but I must confess candidly, these sympathies of friendship or affinity, are easily broken in upon by interest, and dissolved into air. When Brahmin and Rajapoot families grow

numerous, such of the sons as are not wanted at home, and are too proud for menial labour, go abroad to look for service; some enter the army as soldiers, others become chaprassees to the judge, or peons to men of rank among themselves, and indigo planters. These persons live very parsimoniously, and whatever may be the amount of their wages, send home a part to support their families; occasionally they get leave of absence, spend a month at home, and return to that service by which they procure subsistence and help for their relatives. This class of men, who live by service, is very numerous in India, and go where they will, the tie is never dissolved between them and their kindred; according to their customs, a man employed at a distance in service cannot take his wife with him, so that, though hundreds of miles away from them, his home remains the same, and thither his earnings are sent for the support of his wife and family. Frequently all the members of a family live together, and whatever sons are present take care of the wives and children of those who are absent; among these little commonwealths, individuality is suppressed and rendered subservient to the general good, but in case of quarrels or disagreement, they separate and choose distinct habitations; they only eat twice a day, and always bathe before their morning

meal, which is intended as a purifier before meat; their cooking apparatus consists of a few earthen pots; their plates and goblets are made of brass, scoured every day and kept extremely clean; their food consists of rice and ghee, with a curry of vegetables, turmeric, and chillies; kid and fish are sometimes added, but are luxuries seldom made use of except by the rich. Dye, or coagulated milk, is eaten with rice, and is a favourite food with them; they eat with the hand, wash it and their mouth carefully, take a drink of water, and thus their feast concludes; for wines, and even toddy, which is oozed from the palm-tree, are forbidden, or not used by them. There is very little difference between the food of a rich and a poor Hindoo; the former may use more spices, or which is much relished by them, more ghee; but as to variety of meats and dishes, they are pretty much upon a level; curry and rice constitutes the food of both, only one may be richer and more seasoned than the other. The furniture of a respectable man's house consists of a few cushions to lean against, and carpets to sit on; for decoration, either inside or out, is altogether dispensed with; their table expenses are very trifling, for buildings also trifling, but heavy for a train of followers. A rich man keeps elephants and horses, besides a large body of foot-

men to accompany him when he appears in public; these people are all armed with swords, spears, and silver-plated sticks, so that their master on his elephant, seated in a scarlet howdar or saddle, has the appearance of a prince surrounded by his guards: their dress consists of a fine muslin garment, which fits closely to the body and descends to the loins: round their loins and thighs a somewhat coarser cloth is folded, which descends between their legs, whilst the neck and limbs are bare. Over all, in cold weather, they wear a Cashmere shawl, which looks very well, but very lady-like; owing to their meeting often in bodies to transact business, many among them acquire the power of speaking with great ease and facility in public; their gesture too is manly and appropriate, and, I must say, this kind of untutored eloquence is far more prevalent among Indians than Englishmen; their manner has got nothing embarrassed in it, but with an easy, unblushing freedom, one of these rustic orators begins his speech, argues and comments with a degree of acuteness that proves him to be possessed of strong natural parts: so he is; this natural talent displays itself in all the common transactions of life. Fluency of speech, and an addiction to the use of gesture, are among the characteristic traits of a Hindoo, and I have no

doubt that numbers of them would, by proper cultivation, become eminent orators A person of low condition stands before his superior, or if allowed a seat, does not take advantage of it until desired. The salute or salam, as they term it, consists of bowing the head, and touching the forehead twice or thrice with the hand, it is, I think, both respectful and graceful, without in the least degrading a man: the Hindoos send their salam to an absent person as we send our compliments. I shall conclude this article by stating, that although their language to a superior is very complimentary, their manner is by no means refined or polite; they belch without ceremony, or if urged by a call of nature, tell you so without ceremony; whilst their ideas respecting women are delicate to an excess, as far as relates to manners or politeness they are the reverse, and are very deficient in this particular.

Learning is only cultivated among the Hindoos, as far as it is necessary for the useful purposes of life: as to Belles Lettres learning, and reading for accomplishment or amusement, they are unknown and unpractised by this race of men, who in all things study utility rather than entertainment. The Muses here find no Parnassus fit for a habitation; Apollo's lyre is rudely strung, and touched by unskilled hands, whilst

poetry seldom breathes her inspiration upon regions monopolized by industry and art. The learned productions of the Hindoos relate to religion, philosophy, and their ancient history; whilst the perusal of them is confined to pundit or learned brahmins, and the majority of the people are utterly unacquainted with them. Works of taste and fancy in Hindostanee, calculated for the amusement of well-educated people, are unknown, the pleasure of reading is unknown, and is an enjoyment to which they are utter strangers, whilst their acquirements extend no farther than writing letters upon business. Persian is a learned language, and taught to boys at school, as Latin is among us. Their accounts, correspondence, and transactions of business, are kept in it; a caste, called kaits or writers, are employed for this purpose, who learn Persian as a necessary qualification for their profession.

The Golistan and Ferislita are principally studied by their tyros, and Sadi, Ferdusi, Jami, are the authors to whom they owe their education; whilst their book-learning or reading is confined almost exclusively to these celebrated [illegible]ians. The creative and fanciful spirit of [illegible] not seem congenial to a Hindoo; his mind is made for another sphere; his vision embraces only real, sensible objects, without extend-

ing to that world of airy shapes which the poet fashions and beholds; in consequence of this, their literary acquirements are those of a clerk or accountant, without a scintillation or idea of genius. Music is at an ebb almost as low as learning, and whether we regard the performance or instruments, has very little fascination for a European. Their tom-tom or drum, is either made of wood or a semi-circular earthen pot, covered with a goat-skin; their trumpet resembles the speaking-trumpet of a ship; their fiddle is uncouthly formed, resembling ours only in a few outlines, without elegance of shape or construction; its thrumming is dull and unmusical, as the grating of an axletree. When a band of these are sounded together they serve to make a noise which and far from disagreeable, and united with the lowing of cattle, barking of dogs, and braying of asses, constitutes a most cheerful symphony. I do not mean to say there is much harmony in this mixed melody, on the contrary, it is the discord that pleases one. Dancing girls sing to the fiddle, and I think their vocal is pretty much on a par with their instrumental music. Their voice is monotonous, without much pitch or compass, and they repeat the same stanza till one [illegible] it; however, singing, dancing, and gestures united, constitute a whole sufficiently agreeable.

Every country has its particular taste and tone of feeling, and thus it is, these exhibitions, which appear so devoid of merit, and contemptible to a European, convey to an Indian baboo the most touching sensations of delight; whilst our music is listened to by him with feelings of apathy or aversion. The warbling of Catalani and tones of Braham would convey to a Hindoo ear sounds as grateful as the croaking of a raven; and these exquisite chanters would be treated with the most contemptuous apathy, or avoided as sources of discord and annoyance; castratoes would be yawned out of countenance, and Italy might allow her singers to remain men.

Gambling is forbidden by the Hindoo laws as a common practice, and is tolerated only at a particular season for a few days; during this period of license monied men risk large sums on the chances of fortune, and some poor fools, who are diseased with this mania, after losing all their property, stake house, wife, and family, as their last bet, placing endearments, ties, and connexions on the descision of a die! The love of gambling is an overwhelming passion among all eastern nations, and wherever it is unrestrained is productive of the most tragical consequences. Among the Malays, after fortune has despoiled an unhappy wretch of his all; wh[illegible] wealth, wife, and

children have become the prize of a successful adversary, the maniac resigns himself to despair, and declares war upon himself and his species. Intoxicated with opium, and mad with rage, he seizes a kreech, and rushing forth, inflicts death upon every man he meets—persisting in a frantic race and murderous career, until some lucky arm has laid him low. This occurrence is so common at Malacca that spears are placed in different streets so as passengers may be enabled to defend themselves against these desperadoes. I have heard an instance of one of these ruffians being pierced through the body with a spear, and with indescribable ferocity, rushing on against it until he reached and cut his victim down. Considering then the fatal excesses to which this propensity leads, we cannot sufficiently admire the wisdom of those laws which put it under a strict prohibition. The Hindoos play for amusement a game called pucheesy, or twenty-five, which, however, does not lead to gambling. Their table for play consists of numerous cross-lines, which include twenty-five spaces, and the players toss up pice above them, reckoning according as they fall.

Their amusements are mostly of a quiescent kind, for neither their inclination nor climate encourage active exercises. To attend at fairs, or places of public resort, for the purposes of worship

or business is highly gratifying to them. To lounge at their ease and smoke the hooka, or sit among a party of friends, chew betel-nut, and talk upon business, lawsuits, and the various news of their neighbourhood is also another favourite entertainment. Upon a marriage, to accompany the bridal procession, and partake of the feasts, which are given upon various occasions, are also relaxations to which they are addicted. There is a festival called the hŏly, which takes place in February, and is devoted entirely to diversions of a somewhat lewd description. At this time dancing girls, who, it is to observed, are all prostitutes, are hired to dance and sing. The Hindoo dozes in a kind of ecstasy over their performance, whilst their songs, which are generally of an amorous kind, and graceful lascivious motions excite his sensibilities to the utmost. One arm is raised upwards, in a half bend, the other extends the drapery which envelopes their limbs, whilst they are opened out, and assume various postures with the most ready flexibility. The young and sprightly throw a species of red powder about, which colours their faces, turbans, and garments, and gives these sober Hindoos the hue of drunken Bacchanals. The usual chastity of Hindoo manners is relaxed at this period of license; lewd songs are chanted, and gestures exhibited

before women, whilst to crown all, the men assume a certain attribute of Priapus, with which they dance and gambol about their companion. These dancing girls are in great repute among natives of rank, and a celebrated one receives a thousand rupees or more for dancing before a baboo at this time. These who are of an extravagant temper squander their money in this way, and do not scruple to incumber their estates, in order to gratify their passion for dancing girls.

They are totally unacquainted with pugilism, making use of the stick in their quarrels or encounters, in handling which, many of them are expert; they also practise wrestling and possess frequently great muscular strength, as well as skill in this exercise. Tiger and hog hunting are common in India, and are in my opinion two noble diversions, whether we consider the strength and fierceness of these animals, or the manner in which they are hunted. When a party of gentlemen go a tiger hunting, they take the field mounted upon elephants, and seated in a hawdar or kind of wooden box, which has a chair to accommodate two men, and will contain guns and other necessaries. Of these there may be eight or ten, besides a large train of horse and foot, who come from curiosity and desire to see the sport. The huntsmen enter jungle, and places where tigers are

likely to resort, and continue to traverse it till they have found one. He lies close until forced out, when guns are levelled at him from all quarters, and bullets whistle about his ears. He springs forward with a deep awful roar, his paw tears up the earth, his frame trembles with agitation, and his eyes roll round his different adversaries, till he selects one for an attack. A tiger's charge is daunting, and an elephant must be well trained to withstand it, for an untrained one will tremble with fear and run. The tiger comes rushing forward, whilst the elephant faces him with his trunk raised aloft, and endeavours to receive him on his tusk. If the tiger make good his spring upon the elephant's head or shoulder, this latter twines his trunk round the tiger's body, and endeavours to force him off; if successful his adversary retreats dismayed and abashed, or is kicked by his enormous legs; if unsuccessful, the driver or huntsman may be carried off, unless they defend themselves vigorously. The tiger is surrounded by enemies, ball after ball lodges in his body, and he either continues fighting or seeks for safety by flight. In either case he is followed up, and the contest continues until this fierce animal sinks beneath repeated wounds.

In these encounters the elephant is sometimes dragged down by the tiger, and his rider must

depend upon his heels for safety, so that, though casualties may not happen frequently, people get into a critical situation now and then. The tiger possesses great vital energy, and continues to fight after receiving numerous body wounds; a ball in the head will alone dispatch him instantaneously. The hog is hunted by horsemen armed with a spear, who continue the pursuit until he is exhausted with fatigue. The huntsmen then ride up and spear him. Considerable skill and expertness are requisite, as if a spearsman be tardy or awkward, the hog will rear up and wound him or his horse severely. The hog is a very fierce animal, and inflicts dangerous wounds with his tusks, though not so formidable as the tiger, he is equally courageous. The Bengal dogs are of a base breed, and totally unfit for the chace, or any other useful purpose. They are termed pariars, and may be seen lying about the streets in great numbers, or basking in the bazar. They form one of the nuisances which are to be met with in a native town, both from their disgusting appearance and disagreeable snarling. Along the river these dogs are to be seen in great numbers; associate with jackalls and vultures, and subsist principally on carcases. The only noble breed of dogs I know of are the Sesouni dogs, which are said to be exceedingly swift-footed, and run down deer or

any other animal of the chase. The pure breed belongs to this village and is called after it; whilst the villagers take every precaution to prevent it from being more generally propagated by destroying supernumerary whelps and never giving them to strangers. Having now discharged the duty I proposed to myself of giving you a sketch of the Hindoos and their leading features, and having noticed such particulars as appeared to me most worthy of attention, I shall for the present conclude.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XXI.

In giving the Mussulmans a separate description, I do not mean to state many particulars, but shall confine myself to a few grand outlines. Irruptions have been made into India at various periods by different Mahomedan tribes, actuated by the impulse of ambition or fanaticism, and devastating this fertile region, in order to gratify their insatiable avarice by its spoils. Conquests were made under the caliphate of the Ommiades, but the first Mahomedan dynasty permanently established in India

was that of Ghizni. The princes of this race, who figured as conquerors, were animated by the wildest enthusiasm and most pitiless fanaticism: inflamed with all the ardour of recent and barbarous proselytes, the law of their prophet was a watchword for massacre, the Koran a pretext for spoliation and crime. Could he himself have appeared among them, that prophet whom they glorified, would have shrunk from the contact of such fiends. The genius and ambition which impelled his career were those of a legislator and conqueror, not an extirpator. At this period victory was inevitably followed by massacre, and the believer sheathed his sword when unable longer to wield it, when its edge was blunted by the work of death, and brightness tarnished by a coat of blood. To murder idolaters, to hurl death, terror, and grief, among inoffensive millions; to waste a country on which nature had bestowed her largest blessing, like a birth-right boon, these were the exploits of those religious warriors, whose object was to convert the infidels. Fanaticism has got a fury in it, which leads to greater excesses than villainy herself ever imagined or achieved. The Ghiznian, or as it latterly became the Ghorian dynasty, was weakened by Timur's irruption, whose descendant Baber, laid the foundations of the Mogul power, which was completed

by the exploits and heroism of Akbar. Under the Mogul dynasty religious persecutions were abandoned; their views were turned to the extension of their empire, and gratification of ambition; amongst the rigid they were reproached with infidelity; religion was left between man and his Maker. How does the matter stand now? The Mahomedans have imbibed so much of the Hindoo customs, that they may be fairly termed Hindoo Moslems. Torrents of blood have been shed to no purpose, the fanatic has been converted by his victim. In imitation of the Hindoos they reckon four tribes, viz. Seyud, Shaich, Mogul, and Paitan. They have adopted the Hindoo rules of eating, marrying, &c.; are more addicted to ablutions, than the prayers enjoined by their prophet, and in many minutiæ which it is needless to enumerate, coalesce with them. By making these observations I would demonstrate that approximation has taken place between them, not coincidence. The principal ceremony observed among them is called the mohurrim, and is intended to commemorate the death of Hosein, Mahomet's grandson. This young man, who possessed the ambition and spirit, but not the experience of his grandfather, was allowed to live as a private individual in his native city of Medina, whilst aspiring candidates were raised to the caliphate,

which was then transferred to Damascus. The following extract gives an account of his death, and fully displays his heroic character.

"Yezid had not long been proclaimed caliph at Damascus, when a list was secretly transmitted to Hosein, at Medina, of one hundred and forty thousand Moslems, who wished to invest him with that dignity, to which he possessed the better claim of hereditary descent from the prophet; and this list was accompanied with a declaration of their eagerness to draw their swords in his cause as soon as he should appear on the banks of the Euphrates. Against the wisest advice he determined to embrace the invitation, and traversed the desert with a few faithful friends, and a timorous retinue of women and children. As he approached the confines of Irak, he was alarmed by the solitary or hostile appearance of the country, and suspected either the defection or ruin of his party. His fears were well founded. The insurrection was extinguished, and Hosein with his followers was encompassed in the plain of Kerbela by a body of five thousand horse. He might still have escaped to a fortress in the desert that had defied the power of the Roman Cæsars and Persian Chosroes, and confided in the fidelity of the tribe of Tai, which would have armed ten thousand warriors in defence of the

grandson of the prophet; but, in conference with the chief of the enemy, he proposed the option of three honorable conditions—that he should be allowed to return to Medina, or be stationed in a frontier garrison against the Turks, or safely conducted to the presence of Yezid. He was however told, that he must either submit as a captive and criminal to the arms of the caliph, or expect the consequences of his rebellion. 'Do you think,' 'replied he, to terrify me with death?' and during the short space of a night that he was allowed to determine, he prepared with a calm and solemn resignation to encounter his fate. He checked the lamentations of his sister Fatima, who deplored the impending ruin of his house. 'Our trust,' said Hosein, 'is in God alone. All things both in heaven and earth must perish and return to their Creator. My brother, my father, my mother were better than me, and every Mussulman has an example in the prophet.' He pressde his friends to consult their safety by a timely flight; but they unanimously refused to desert or survive their beloved master. On the following morning he mounted his horse, with his sword in one hand and the Koran in the other: his generous band of martyrs consisted only of thirty-two horse and forty foot, but their flanks and rear were secured by their tent ropes, and by

a trench which they had filled with burning faggots. The enemy advanced with reluctance; and one of their chiefs deserted with thirty followers to claim the partnership of inevitable death. In every close onset, or single combat, the despair of the devoted was invincible; but the surrounding multitudes galled them from a distance with showers of arrows, and horses and men were successively slain; a truce was allowed on both sides for the hour of prayer, and the battle at length expired by the death of the last of the companions of Hosein. Alone, weary, and wounded, his horse being killed under him, he seated himself at the door of his tent. As he tasted a drop of water, he was pierced in the mouth by a dart, and his son and nephew, two beautiful boys, were killed in his arms; he lifted his hands to heaven, they were full of blood, and he uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead. In a transport of despair his sister, Fatima, issued from the tent, and adjured Hamer, the commander of the enemy, not to suffer Hosein to be murdered before his eyes; and the boldest of the assailants fell back on every side, as the dying hero threw himself among them. The remorseless Hamor reproached their pusillanimity, and the grandson of the prophet was slain with three and thirty strokes of sabres and lances; after they had

trampled on the body, they carried the head to the castle of Cufa, and Obeidollah struck the mouth with a cane. 'Alas!' exclaimed an aged Mussulman among his attendants, 'on those lips I have seen the lips of the prophet of God*.'"

So little did the descendants of Mahomet owe to his greatness, and so black was their fortune contrasted with his!

During the mohurrim the Mahomedans observe a severe fast; at night they pray, beat their breasts violently, and call upon the name of Hosein. Toward its conclusion they construct a tomb, and make a paper tower for an offering, similar to those formed by the Hindoos upon such an occasion, which is carried in procession, surrounded by men who engage in mock fights, and thrown into a river.

The Mussulmans are versatile and changeable in disposition, but not more addicted to intrigue and dissimulation than the Hindoos. A Mussulman has not so much scheming and trickery as a brahmin, but resembles the Rajahpoot more in temper. Men of rank affect to speak in the Persian language; are very choice respecting their phrases; respectful and polite in their deportment. I know of no man more refined in

* Gibbon.

his manners and address than an accomplished Mussulman; none more easy and agreeable; he entertains high and lofty notions, despises any thing mean or degrading, and possesses an emulation to shine, to please, which is sure to succeed; he is attentive, but not importunate, affable, but not subservient; they live in villages together with the Hindoos, sometimes more, but generally less numerous; those animosities which are so frequent between distinct people, do not find footing among them, both are descendants of the soil, and live together in peace; there are distinctions but not divisions; party quarrels and feuds do not operate upon men who are constantly employed; they possess villages, engage in agriculture, and follow service like the Hindoos; whilst native writers are all Hindoos, the Lascars, and most of the boatmen employed in the internal navigation, are Mussulmans, from which it would appear they are more addicted to active than sedentary employments. The domestic servants of Europeans are Mussulmans, as our mode of living is too repugnant to their prejudices, to admit of Hindoos serving us; many of them are employed in the army, others as chaprassees, but here the connection ends. Natives employed in the private and public offices, are Hindoos; the judge's omlahs, thannedars, and the

head servants of indigo planters, are generally Hindoos; so that, in all civil departments, they enjoy a superiority over the Mussulmans.

No doubt the Mahomedans think of past greatness with a sigh, and view their supplanters with secret malignity—it is natural they should, but our power is too firm to be shaken by their discontents. It is by good government alone our authority can become permanent, and defend itself against the accidents which time and circumstances may engender. Let us expiate our crimes against the princes of India, by our good conduct to the people; let our rule resemble the ægis of wisdom and power, infusing health, and strength, and life, in whatever it approaches, not the head of Medusa, petrifying whoever dares to look on it.

ADDENDA.

I shall conclude my observations on India, by stating some particulars concerning its diseases; this I shall do, as a common observer merely, without any pretensions of a medical nature.

Cholera morbus is an epidemic which commits more ravages annually in India than any other;

it is not considered infectious, but to proceed from some predisposing cause which has not been accurately ascertained. Once it was reported to proceed from the eating of tamarind fish which are caught in the spring season; however, this ridiculous notion was soon exploded. Dr. Tytler has long maintained, that it proceeds from the use of a certain kind of base rice, called Ouse rice, which he insists is poisonous; the faculty have laughed at this opinion, but have done nothing to discover the cause themselves. I shall describe the disease, and give you my opinion on this subject: the patient is affected at first by violent griping and pai[illegible] the intestines, these symptoms are quickly lowed by vomiting and violent purging; fæcal discharge is of a serous nature; sp[illegible] ensue, and the victim is carried off in six, ten twenty hours; its ravages are principally [illegible] fined to the natives, and are most severe from A[illegible]l till the rains commence. In mentioning w[illegible] appears to me the cause from which this dis[illegible] originates, I confess myself unable to exp[illegible] by what means it operates so as to produce t[illegible] tragical effects which ensue; however, most peopl[illegible] I believe, will agree with me, that the offensi[illegible] matter to which I attribute it, is of a natur[illegible] likely to generate diseases, whether of the specie[illegible]

at present under discussion or not. Natives in the interior principally use tank water, which, after remaining stagnant for several months, gets dreadfully putrid and offensive during the heats of April. At this period the villagers use a beverage full of putrefaction and corruption, which, I should think, must affect the animal juices, and impregnate them with the seeds of disease; about this time, or earlier, if it be a dry and warm season, when the water has assumed a green putrid hue, and is loaded with miasmata, the cholera morbus commences its attacks, and continues them until the rains fill up their tanks with fresh water, supply them with a wholesome beverage, and remove the cause of this mortality. To give an idea of water which has such prejudicial effects, it is necessary to state the villagers bathe in it, oxen, buffalos, horses, drink out of, and frequently lie in it on account of the excessive heat; so that it is a reservoir for the general filth, and has such an offensive stench, that, on encamping near a village at this time, I have been unable to make use of it even for bathing. I have nothing more to say upon this subject, but merely to state what appears to me a simple fact, that cholera morbus in India, proceeds from the drinking of stagnant,

putrid water. Leprosy, a disease which is very little known in Europe, is common in India, and exists in various degrees of malignity, it may proceed from hereditary taint, or be contracted like any other disorder to which people are subject. There is a considerable difference between a hereditary leper, and one who is so from impurity of the blood, for the former does not exhibit such marked and ostensible symptoms as the latter; the skin peels off the hand, arm, or leg of a person who has inherited leprosy, so that this part appears quite white but not ulcerated or sore, the under cuticle remaining entire; and if this unsound part were covered, it would be impossible, in many cases, to know the patient was affected with this or any other disease. A gentleman who died of leprosy some time ago in Calcutta, is said to have caught his disorder from a bearer who was afflicted with it, which he concealed from his master, by keeping the part carefully covered. However I will not vouch for the truth of this story, nor indeed for the disease being caught by infection at all, as I am inclined to think it proceeds either from hereditary taint, or contracted impurity. On account of its virulent nature, and difficulty of cure it is one of the most distressing disorders by

which humanity is afflicted, and baffles the skill and experience of medical men; among the natives, in some provinces, it is very common, and instances of its occurrence are met with amongst the Indo-Britons and Europeans. I shall describe that species of leprosy which is most common: a person attacked with it is bloated in the face; his forehead, nose, lips, and ears swell out; his nostrils expand; his eyes appear sunk and very fiery; the tone of his voice is altered to a loud and somewhat nasal sound; no eruptions appear upon his body, but his skin is hard, parched, and dry, having entirely lost its softness and moisture; about the shoulders he appears tight and contracted; his knees are stiff, and motions constrained; the hair falls off him, or is seen in their stunted stalks, dried up from want of wholesome nourishment; his breath is fœtid, his perspiration stopped, or if it it flows at all is rank and stinking; he complains of excessive internal heat, cannot bear exposure to the sun, and is irregular in his discharges, the digestive organs performing their functions very imperfectly; there is a certain numbness seizes all his faculties, so that his sensations of pleasure and pain are considerably impaired; and lepers of this kind have no excessive propensity to venery after the disease appears, although they may have had before it. It is the common opinion that people

seized with this malady are of a warm and amorous temperament; this, I am convinced, is correct; but when a person is seized with leprosy, the pleasure derived from such indulgences, and the capacity for them are in a great measure annulled. After these primary symptoms, when the disease has become inveterate, the leper's fingers are gradually eaten away, and drop off at the joints; his toes are affected in a similar manner, and sores break out about his ancles and wrists. During the progress of these cancerous attacks no excruciating pain is endured by the leper, owing to that numbness which I have already stated as pervading his system, whilst the disease proceeds gradually ulcerating his flesh, and dissolving his joints till the vitals become affected. In the last stage his flesh gapes with long sores, his mouth, nose, and brain dissolve before the leprous poison, till death happily relieves him from such accumulated miseries. Some fakirs profess to cure this disease, if applied to at an early stage of it; and I have myself known men healed by them. To effect a cure these persons administer a root procured from Nepaul, which causes copious salivation; they also put the patient on a regimen, forbid him the use of salt, and sexual cohabition, and persons who have been attacked by it generally abstain from these during

the remainder of their lives. I shall hazard my opinion upon this, as upon other subjects, according to my own observations and conceptions, without expecting that you or any one else will attach much weight to them: the soil in many parts of India is strongly impregnated with saltpetre, so that the various productions are tinctured with it, and imbibe saltpetre particles in the course of their growth; by this means it is introduced to the system, and when increased to a certain proportion becomes the cause of that fatal disorder which I have described. The heat of the human body in India, far exceeds its usual temperament in cold countries, and any thing tending to increase this, in a great degree, lays the foundations of disease; thus excessive venery prevents those eruptions from breaking out that are conducive to health, checks perspiration, and loads the blood with impurities; the pores become contracted, and those salts with which the system is surcharged, more in India than the countries of Europe, owing to the saltpetre nature of the soil, are prevented from escaping. If proper measures were resorted to at first, they might be expelled, but through time and neglect they continue increasing, they mingle with the blood. I have already, in explaining the process of making saltpetre, stated that it possesses a vegetative power

and cannot be expelled from land; in like manner it roots in the system, and resists the power of medicines; all the artillery of prescriptions is levelled at it in vain, it keeps its seat in spite of them. Having remained a certain period inactive, it at length grows up to full vigour, attacks the muscles, extremeties, and joints, wherever there is least power to withstand its force, and continues augmenting until the work is completed. I will go a point farther than I have, and assert that an immoderate, irrational use of salt in India may bring on leprosy; the prohibition of this spice to lepers first attracted my attention towards it, and from facts which came under my cognizance, I was led to conclude that this disorder is a kind of inveterate scurvy caused by salts and saltpetre mingling with the blood. Wens upon the head or neck are very common in some parts; I have seen people sometimes with a wen growing at their throat nearly the size of their head The natives attribute them to a certain bad quality in the water. Spleen is also another disease common in India which I have known to be cured by the patient taking a quantity of arsenic, and immediately after eating fish, which is said to act as an antidote against its poisonous effects; the disease is completely dissolved by this powerful drug, and the patient cured. Siphylis is also very

common amongst them; they are acquainted with the different species of this disorder, and employ calomel or other medicines as the nature of the case requires. Amongst the lower orders and the wandering danghers, it is often productive of fatal effects, owing to the cure being incomplete, and the occurrence of secondary symptoms. I have seen a husband, his wife, and child, all affected with it, and have known many instance where a whole family have been plunged into misery by the same cause, originating in improper treatment of the disease. Perhaps I am wrong for touching upon these subjects, and the faculty may laugh at me, but this must be borne, for I have intended only to gratify your curiosity without convincing them.

THE END.

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